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University  
of Glasgow

The World of Development as Experienced and Perceived by the San  
through the RADP: The Case of Khwee and Sehunong Settlements

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**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree  
of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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## Abstract

Poverty and underdevelopment are long standing concerns that characterise San communities in Botswana. Several policies and programmes have been put in place to address these concerns one of which is the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP), in place since 1974. Whereas past studies have reported on the failure of the RADP, this study employs it as a vehicle to understand the San's development landscape. The main purpose of the study was to explore and describe the San's perceptions and experiences of development

A qualitative multiple-case study approach using semi structured interviews and focus groups were adopted to capture the experiences and perceptions of the San as they evolve within their environment. Critical social theory, which argues that all social relations are power relations and those who are dominant use their power to (re)produce their position of privilege, was used to construct the theoretical framework for the study. Data analysis produced three key findings. Key finding one was that development is a politicised concept interlocked within the politics of power. While the San are on the periphery of power as objects of the development process, the dominant *Tswana* speaking groups are located within the centre of power where they are privileged to control the development process, by deciding who gets access to resources. This creates a 'virtuous cycle of self-reinforcing development' for the dominant *Tswana* groups and a 'vicious cycle of poverty' for the powerless San. Key finding two was that poverty is a by-product of processes seated in unequal social relationships of power. Key finding three presents the politics of participation. Participation becomes evidence of the power and control of each group in the development process. This study thus concluded that poverty and underdevelopment are not economic in their mutation, but are by-products of unequal power relations embedded in a struggle of class interests.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved mother, the late Angelina M. Molosi who did not live long enough to celebrate my achievement,

And

To my husband Nametso France for being there for me during this tough intellectual journey and running our family single handedly in my absence,

To my son Atlaatla for enduring my years of absence as a young child

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My beloved sister, Gosego N. Molosi deserves appreciation for looking after my son with all the love that a one year old child can get.

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**To God be the glory**

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### **Author's declaration**

I, **Keneilwe Molosi**, hereby declare that the doctoral thesis entitled, **The World of Development as Experienced and Perceived by the San through the RADP: The Case of Khwee and Sehunong Settlements**, is a result of my original and independent research, and that all sources used have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has not been submitted to this or other University for the same or similar award.



# Chapter 1

## Background and study context

This chapter seeks to provide the background and context for the study, and to locate it in Botswana's historical and political context. The main purpose of this study is to explore the San people's perceptions and experiences of socio-economic development through the Remote Area Development Programme. The programme is meant to fight poverty among communities residing in Botswana's remotest areas. The San people are the poorest of the poor among the beneficiaries of the Remote Area Development Programme (Good, 1999; Saugestad, 2001).

### 1.1 Context: Historical background

Botswana is a landlocked country in the southern part of Africa. The country gained independence from Great Britain in 1966 after many years of colonial rule. With a population of less than two million people, it is perhaps the smallest in sub-Saharan Africa (Molosi, 2008). The people of Botswana are called Batswana (plural) and Motswana (singular). Although Botswana is multi-ethnic, English and Setswana<sup>1</sup> are the only official and national languages respectively. According to Solway (2002, p.715) the degree to which Setswana is the predominant language reflects the success of the politically dominant *Tswana* in asserting their cultural hegemony. Botswana is a multi-ethnic society although the constitution recognises only the *Tswana* speaking groups. The Government of Botswana defends this position in the interests of national cohesion; it does not want to develop communities along the lines of their special socio-economic needs as that would seem to be deviating from the discourse of nationalism. This stand of the government has been labeled as the *Tswanadom*<sup>2</sup> discourse. Although the government defends the *Tswanadom* discourse, many have

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<sup>1</sup> A language spoken by the dominant groups in Botswana

<sup>2</sup> This word is used by (Werbner, 2002) to refer to the cultural nationalism that the government is pursuing; that we are all *Tswana*

interpreted it as privileging particular ethnic groups at the expense of others (Datta & Murray, 1989; Nyathi-Ramahobo, 2008; Solway, 2002).

According to Datta and Murray (1989) the ethnic groups found in Botswana are of unequally perceived statuses, with some regarded as 'inferior' and others 'superior'. According to Solway (2002) these concepts of 'inferior' and 'superior' are socially constructed based on specific historical, political and social circumstances. Among the 'inferior' groups are the San, who are perhaps on the very lowest rung of these groups. The differing ethnic statuses can be evidenced by the fact that there exists recognition of only eight tribes in the constitution of Botswana despite there being approximately thirty four ethnic groups. Those classified as minority groups are expected to consolidate into the 'superior' tribes in their areas (Nyathi-Ramahobo, 2008) so that they can live under the sovereignty of these 'superior' groups. For example, as the San in Khwee and Sehung are located in the central district, they exist under the sovereignty of the *Bangwato*<sup>3</sup> who are the dominant group in the central district.

The superior-minority setup has been criticised for privileging the 'superior' groups while under-privileging the 'inferior' groups, such as the San. As explained by Solway (2002), an ascribed and stigmatised ethnic identity is employed to exclude people from participating in valued activities, gaining access to resources and holding political office. As such, this can be interpreted as the creation of a social structure that entrenches unequal power relations, which perpetuates subordination. According to Nyathi-Ramahobo (2008), the majority of those who form minority groups are impoverished, marginalised, and exploited by the dominant groups, with the support of the state. As argued by Nthomang (2008) this construction of the *Tswana* society has in many ways helped justify the promotion of development approaches that are patronising.

Although there are other groups which have been disadvantaged by the *Tswana* discourse, the San appear to be the most disadvantaged, as their position on the lowest social rung contrasts sharply with the situation of other ethnic groups (Selolwane, 2004). According to historical accounts, the San in

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<sup>3</sup> One of the eight dominant groups/tribes recognised by the constitution of Botswana



Botswana were the first people to inhabit what is now called Botswana (Wagner, 2006). It was later, when *Tswana* speaking groups began to inhabit the same area as the San in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that a rising *Tswana* gained wealth and power while the San lived at the periphery (Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000). To this end, Nthomang (2008, p.42) concluded that the poverty state of the San can at least partly be attributed to *Tswana* accumulation which eventually resulted in structured dominant/subordinate relations. Thus the general social context in this instance is tied in with complex issues of inequality. For instance, although the dominant *Tswana* groups do not include ethnic groups such as the *Bakgalagadi*, hierarchically the San are the lowest in terms of power, resources and influence (Mazonde, 2001). As such, within communities comprising other groups alongside the San, the San are often dominated and discriminated against. As explained by Mazonde, this is easily achieved because of the considerable variation in power and control.

The San's domination and marginalisation is not only evident at individual and community levels but has even found its way into government levels, as illustrated by the paternalistic development models and policies. Consistent with the arguments made by Saugestad (2001), government policies represent the views of the dominant *Tswana* groups.

## **1.2 Background to the study**

The literature evidences the conundrum that surrounds development issues all over the world. Studies show that finding appropriate models for development and development assistance has been challenging; these challenges are multiplied when it comes to development for indigenous people such as the San (Armstrong & Bennett, 2002; Tauli-Corpuz, 2005). The challenges mainly stem from perceptions of what should be counted as development. As Perreault (2003) , p.35 highlights, what for the World Bank or International Monetary Fund (IMF) is a process of development and poverty alleviation is for some an inefficient waste of resources on undeserving targets, while some even critique development as an apparatus of western hegemony that creates, rather than eliminates, poverty. This discord and debate in understanding development is not restricted to big international development agencies; it flows even to

individual governments. Thus, the multivalence and at times contradictory character of development prompts interrogation into development and the ways that it is enacted, understood, and contested. Currently, as in the past, the San are locked in a dynamic struggle with the government over issues of development; these issues need to be properly understood in order that a robust development route can be implemented.

After gaining independence from Great Britain, Botswana was one of the poor and underdeveloped African states. As a result, over the years since her independence, Botswana has sought to achieve poverty eradication and development for all her people. Development in Botswana is guided by national development plans (NDP), which contain government strategies for a specific plan period. Among the strategies to facilitate development in the current NDP is Vision 2016. The visions of fighting poverty and upholding development contained within Vision 2016 are objectives of social justice enshrined in the 'just, compassionate and caring nation'. The other Vision 2016 pillar that supports development is 'a prosperous, productive and innovative nation' which aims at sustainable development and economic growth and diversification. The national Vision 2016 articulates prosperity for all by outlining Botswana's development aspirations.

At international level, commitment to development and poverty alleviation is in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which Botswana is a signatory to. Signatories of the MDGs are committed to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and the provision of basic services such as healthcare and education. Since their adoption in 2001, the MDGs have dominated the development agenda and have provided much needed impetus to meet the needs of the world's poorest. However, as with all other developments in Botswana, the opacity of the MDGs in improving development interventions for indigenous people such as the San stems from denying them special attention. It is evident that this perception of indigenous poverty and development issues thwarts most of the interventions meant for them. Nthomang (2002) warns that unless the particular situation of indigenous people is adequately taken into account, some MDG processes may further marginalise them because their

history of poverty and underdevelopment is very important in informing their development interventions.

The Government of Botswana has been making efforts to help develop San people through various projects, the RADP being one of them. However, little progress has been realised. The San are still bedeviled by significant socio-economic challenges such as marginalisation, unemployment, exploitation and poverty even with the advent of the RADP. Most of the San live below the poverty datum line and they are dominant among the poor statistics (Good, 1999). According to Kann, Hitchcock, and Mberere (1990), the San are the underclass within an underclass, the poorest of the desperately poor. The problems faced by the San are typical 'indigenous peoples problems' (Cherubini, 2008). It is against this background that this study seeks to explore the San's experiences and perceptions of development through the RADP.

### **1.3 Background to the Remote Area Development Programme**

The current Remote Area Development Programme (RADP) started off as the Bushman/*Basarwa*<sup>4</sup> Development Programme in 1974. The programme arose as a special official commitment by the Government of Botswana to assist the Bushmen/*Basarwa* in developing along with the rest of the population (Koketso, 2000). It was mainly designed because 'there was a lack of development in predominantly *Basarwa* inhabited areas despite the Accelerated Rural Development Programme' (Government of Botswana, 2009). Saugestad (2001, p.122) observed that the San could not access the initial rural development initiatives because the then rural development was based on a conventional large population agglomeration approach and biased towards pastoral economic activity. In this case, the then rural development initiative excluded the San's way of life because they neither live as a large population nor are they pastoralists. The Government of Botswana adopted the integration approach to development, whereby the San are refused the right to be different in a bid to

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<sup>4</sup> A local name used to address the San

try to 'develop' them through integrating them with the mainstream Batswana (Hitchcock & Vinding, 2004, p.142). Saugestad (2001) reports that the state felt that, if *Basarwa* were left to determine their own future (without enforcing integration), they may choose to remain on the margins of development.

Although the Bushman/*Basarwa* Development Programme started with an ethnic orientation, it was broadened in 1978 to include all the communities that reside in remote areas. This was necessitated by the realisation that there were other minority groups experiencing the same circumstances as the San and, as such, it was unfair to exclude them in such an endeavor of development. In fact, moral and political questions influenced the change of focus of the programme. One of the greatest concerns was whether it was politically expedient to single out one group as special beneficiaries of a programme that was being financed through public funds (Saugestad, 2001). On the other hand, whatever decision was to be taken should be advantageous for all beneficiaries, the San included. The move to adopt a geographic approach to poverty in this context surely had implications. Although not all poor people in remote areas are San, most are and, conversely, although not all the San qualify for assistance according to the RADP concept, most do (Saugestad, 1994). Nthomang (1999) indicated that the San constitute 80% of the remote area dweller population.

The programme changed emphasis from ethnicity to remoteness and, thus, the programme name changed from the Bushman/*Basarwa* Development Programme to the Remote Area Development Programme. The change in name and focus of the programme has however been subject to different interpretations and views from researchers and scholars. Hitchcock (1988) argues that the change in the focus and beneficiaries of the Bushman/*Basarwa* Development Programme was an attempt by the government to pre-empt accusations of singling out one ethnic group for government assistance. Saugestad (1994) on the other hand sees the change as reflecting attempts to accommodate potentially conflicting interests within the same official concept. Furthermore, some researchers (Campbell & Main, 1991) argue that even the intended recipients of the programme reject the name, which in Setswana translates to '*batho ba tengnyana teng*' meaning people of the deepest deep. In fact, Campbell and Main (1991) noted that, in reality, the term 'remote' connotes remoteness from

power, specifically to access land and water. Accessing land and water are some of the challenges the San are facing with the government.

Various reviews have been undertaken calling on modification of the focus of the programme. For instance, the 1985 review led to the Accelerated Remote Area Development Programme which aimed to establish permanent settlements, which were believed to make the provision of public services more straightforward. To date, the RADP is implemented in seven districts and there are 65 remote area dweller settlements among these seven districts. Within settlements, schools, health posts, water and other infrastructure are provided.

A review was again undertaken in 2009 to produce a Revised Remote Area Development Programme (RRADP), which is aligned to other relevant policies that were also reviewed and changed. Notable changes were realised in the RRADP. For instance, even though the programme aims to help anyone who is a remote area dweller, without consideration of ethnicity, the San are singled out from the targeted group that is going to be helped irrespective of their place of residence (Government of Botswana, 2009, p.8). However, despite this special treatment/waiver, the San's lives have not considerably changed.

Despite the good intentions of the RADP to fight poverty among the remote populations - especially the San - research has shown that the San continue to be poor and marginalised (Molebatsi, 2002; Saugestad, 2001; Nthomang, 1999). According to Good (1990), no people in Botswana today are poorer or weaker than the *Basarwa*. It should be acknowledged however that the RADP has brought obvious social provisions to most San settlements, especially in terms of infrastructure development and temporary employment in construction companies, but the San's socio-economic situation still remains a challenge (Nthomang, 1999). According to the literature, socio-economic development should result in an individual who is self-reliant, self-confident and empowered to participate freely in social structures of decision-making (Burkey, 1993). Socio-economic development should free people from the chains of all kinds of societal bondage, such as inferiority complex, shame and dependence, discrimination and marginalisation in all its forms. According to Cox (1987) 'social development should fulfill the non-material needs to allow individuals for

full lives and fulfillment of human potentials. These non-material needs are wide ranging and may include personal liberty, cultural and national identity, educational opportunity and freedom from inequality and dependency' (p.11). These are the aspects that one would expect to witness in the efforts of the RADP.

## **1.4 Statement of the problem**

There has not been a lack of official recognition of the social problems of the San, nor a lack of concern for their poverty and marginalisation (Saugestad, 2001). For three decades, the Government of Botswana has provided various goods and services to San communities as a way of reducing poverty and bringing development. However, despite the existence of all the programmes meant to lift the San from poverty, the San are still poor and are still fighting the same social problems that have always existed (Good, 1990). For instance, despite the RADP having existed for more than two decades, the San continue to be stuck in poverty and facing social ills such as unemployment, alcohol abuse, marginalization, exploitation, low participation in education and a lack of land rights. At the very least, the persistence of these social ills should cause us to question the 'missing link' in the government's development efforts for the San. There have been reported concerns that the RADP's ineffectiveness stems from its general approach to poverty and development of the remote area dwellers (le Roux, 1998; Saugestad, 2001). Another explanation for the weakness of the RADP concerns the tangential lifestyle of the San which has not been incorporated into the RADP interventions. Other scholars dismiss this explanation on the grounds that the San, like other people, have to respond to the current changes (Goncalves, 2006; Ndahinda, 2011). However, although in this context much is known about the San's poverty and lack of development, few studies have explored how the San in Khwee and Sehunong perceive their poverty and 'underdevelopment' and what they perceive as being the cause and solutions of their plight, let alone their own construction of development and poverty. It is these perceptions that this study seeks to explore, so as to understand the divergences and common ground that can be useful for the San's 'development' and poverty alleviation strategies.

## **1.5 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to explore and describe the perceptions and experiences of the San with regard to their socio-economic development through the RADP.

## **1.6 Research Questions:**

1. How do some settled San communities conceptualise development?
2. What are these settled San communities' perceptions of poverty and what do they perceive as the role of the RADP in poverty reduction?
3. What role does the San status play in shaping their development experiences?

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study are likely to benefit those listed below in different ways:

### **Policy makers**

The findings of this study may unearth new ideas that could aid efforts to help in the development of the San. This study intends to unearth perceptions, dreams and the interpretation of development by the San and this might result in development that is more relevant to the San communities of Khwee and Sehunong. Knowledge gained from this study could also help to inform future programmes for other San groups.

### **Stakeholders in the development issues of the San**

This study is likely to expose critical issues that might have been overlooked in the development of the San. The findings may prompt new ideas for organisations such as the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) and the Kuru Development Trust. These organisations are concerned with the wellbeing and development of the San.

## **The researcher**

As a result of her immersion in this study, the researcher has gained insight and understanding as well as a renewed perspective about how the San people view the discourse of development and which intervention methods could be appropriate for them. This is critical for the professional advancement of the researcher as an adult educator interested in issues of community development and equal opportunities for disadvantaged groups.

This study however has methodological limitations which are explained in chapter 3, (see 3.3.3).

## **1.8 Structure of the thesis**

This thesis is organised into 8 chapters including this introduction chapter as chapter 1. As the introduction chapter provided a background to the study and the research problem, chapter 2 is the review of literature which locates the study within the existing literature and critical social theory framework. The chapter starts by reviewing the literature on social policy in Botswana so as to understand the development policy making context. Policy making is a political process. In examining the social policy context, the literature indicated that development policy making is a site for struggle entrenched in unequal power relations and statuses. The status of the San as indigenous people is also examined and it is contested. The literature on indigenous people and development was reviewed and revealed that development for the indigenous people is surrounded by incidences of domination and disempowerment. Various development strategies undertaken to address the plight of the indigenous people were further examined and revealed that they have not yet been effective, including the Remote Area Development Programme. Additionally, the theoretical framework that guided this study is presented. Although the study in the beginning intended to utilise a combination of critical social theory and participatory development theory to understand the study phenomenon, in the end the two theories did not work well together on the data collected and only critical social theory was used to understand San development landscape.



Chapter 3 explains the methodology adopted in investigating the phenomenon of development and addressing the research questions that arose from the literature review. This chapter specifies and justifies the research design adopted in this study, methods of data collection used to explore the San's development experiences and perceptions, and methods of data analysis.

Chapters, 4, 5 and 6 presents findings of the study. Chapter 4 presents an analysis of the participants' perceptions of development. It includes conceptualisations of development and reasons why the San in Khwee and Sehunong continue to be less developed. Chapter 5 analyses perceptions and experiences of poverty. Chapter 6 examines how the San's social status affects their development. Issues of participation and decision-making are explored. All the key findings are linked to the research questions, existing literature and the theoretical framework in chapter 7 (discussion of findings). The three key findings of this study are based on the dilemmas of development, dimensions of poverty and the politics of participation.

Chapter 8 is the last chapter which draws conclusions and provide recommendations and implications for practice and theory. This study concluded that development is a power game, where the powerful consistently struggle to ensure that their position is maintained and continuously reproduced from generation to generation.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the theoretical foundations of this study. It is divided into two sections, literature review and theoretical framework. The main aim of this chapter is to locate the situation of development and poverty among the indigenous San within the local, regional and international body of literature. Since development is a policy concept, the chapter starts by reviewing the literature on social policy in Botswana so as to understand the development policy making context. Similar cases are drawn from regional and international platforms in order to identify similarities and differences in development policy making. It is necessary to explore the policy context because that is where decisions and strategies of development emanate. Considering the status of the San as indigenous people, the literature on indigenous people, poverty and development is also examined to understand how development idea evolved and progressed in indigenous people's communities worldwide. Also, various development strategies undertaken to address the plight of the indigenous people are further examined to identify how effective they are. Multiculturalism, interculturalism and participatory development literature are some of the development strategies examined in this chapter.

The second part of this chapter underpins the discourse of development within critical social theory and participatory development theory perspectives. Since the main aim of development is to empower, it is thought that when used together, the two theories may help in examining the ineffectiveness of development strategies and interventions for the indigenous San. As explained in chapter 1, development of the San is anchored on power inequalities based on their ascribed social status.

## 2.2 Social Policy context in Botswana

Botswana has several social policies which are meant to meet the needs of members of society and improve wellbeing. Most social policies are drawn up in relation to national development plans which drive government development targets. Besides development plans, there are other government documents that guide social policy such as the country's Vision 2016. Vision 2016 has several pillars that can be used to guide policy and other actions. For instance, social policy can be layered within the 'just and caring nation' pillar.

As the Government of Botswana pursues its nation building efforts, policies that address specific ethnic groups are avoided as it is feared they will have overtones of separate development which could potentially discourage these efforts (see Molebatsi,2002;Saugestad,2001). Hence, the government in its policies has so far made efforts towards nation building by downplaying the importance of ethnicity and repudiating anything that has an ethnicity tag in all government policies and structures. For example, Solway (2002) highlighted that in 1998, the government's media policy denied a radio license to Promotion of Ikalanga Language (SPIL) for an Ikalanga station because it pursued the interests not of nationalism but of ethnicity. Similarly, the fact that censuses do not collect information showing ethnicity in part demonstrates the government's position that ethnicity is not important for development. According to Saugestad (2002) , p.73 the government deems that 'a prudent policy could then be to under communicate all expressions of cultural diversity and to emphasize the opposite, namely national homogeneity'. Werbner (2002) terms this '*Tswanification*' or '*Tswanalisation*'. The terms '*Tswanification*' or '*Tswanalisation*' are used by Werbner to refer to the cultural nationalism that the government is pursuing; that we are all *Batswana*. This position of the government triggers questions that need to be answered. For instance, does distinctiveness weaken nationalism? Alternatively, is it possible to pursue nation building while at the same time preserving and harnessing different cultures? If the San were left to be distinctive, would it mean that nation building will not be achieved? These are some of the contestations that exist in the literature

and, whilst the researcher is not suggesting that the current study can answer them all, discussions can hopefully be opened up in this direction.

Proponents of nationalism are of the view that common culture should take prominence over individual culture. The arguments for nationalism however do not quite address the role of minority cultures in the whole picture. Wolfe and Klausen (1997) in their analysis of inequality and inclusion in America, argued that the recent emergence of identity politics, including territorial politics, has contributed to the undermining of the welfare state by compromising the common culture and sense of national citizenship. In agreement, Miller (2000) opined that a shared national identity embodies feelings of solidarity and mutual obligation among members of a national community. Miller argues that, without these feelings, citizens would expect to receive benefits in proportion to the contributions they make, thus precluding a redistribution of resources on the basis of need. Similarly, Canovan (1996) reiterates that the sense of communal solidarity inherent in national identity explains why goods and possessions should be regarded as shared and defines the boundaries within which they should be redistributed.

When national identity takes priority over individual or group identity, special individual needs tend to be overlooked and policies seem assimilative. Meer and Modood (2012) caution that, in not easily fitting into a majoritarian account of national identity, or being either unable or unwilling to be reduced to, or assimilated into, a prescribed public culture, minority 'difference' may become variously negatively conceived. In its endeavor to promote nation building, social policies in Botswana have been made hegemonic because they appear to be based on the interests of the dominant social groups. Nyathi (2003) defines the dominant group society as the one which may be either numerically small or large but which successfully shapes and controls other groups through its superior access to social power. According to Saugestad (2002) 'nationalism typically attempts to make national identity hegemonic, in other words to be seen as a self-evident and natural order which is taken for granted' (p.72).

Although it is claimed that the RADP operates through the philosophy of integration ( see Government of Botswana,2009), the issue of how cultural and

ethnic identities are preserved within integrative policies is usually controversial; the divide between assimilation and integration policy philosophies is difficult to clearly identify. For instance, some scholars argue that the RADP has assimilative rather than integration overtones (Molebatsi, 2002; Nthomang, 2002). Thus, we are compelled to question whether integration is an extension of assimilation or an updated version of assimilation. It is also important to establish the understandings the San attach to these ideologies. This seems to have been omitted by existing studies that have dealt with the San and the RADP.

### ***2.2.1 Policy making power and influence in Botswana***

Policy initiation and deliberation in Botswana is believed to be a bureaucratic function. Botswana is essentially viewed as an administrative state which the bureaucrats have more control over policy decision-making when compared to politicians (Charlton, 1991). Unlike other African states where policy is characterised by varying shades of patrimonialism and personal rule, policy making in Botswana is characterised by bureaucracy and technocracy. In fact, Picard (1987) opines that the bureaucracy is at once a major factor in the policy making process and a policy dominant socio-economic group in Botswana.

According to Charlton (1991, p.266) ‘not only is the bureaucracy defined as ‘a significant interest group’, but it is also held to ‘play a disproportionately large policy role’ within Botswana’s policy circle’. As a result, social policy formulation in Botswana is usually a top-down process dominated by government bureaucrats; beneficiaries are often involved at the implementation stage. Molutsi and Holm (1990) highlighted that, although the concept of consultation is officially afforded a high profile in the policy system in Botswana, it is, in fact, top civil servants who dominate the policymaking process. According to Mwansa, Lucas, and Osei-Hwedie (1998), other structures which exist, such as district- and village-level institutions, are consulted in the complex processes, but their interventions are normally disregarded. It seems that consultation with the communities is no more than a matter of principle, since such consultations only occur after a particular policy option has been decided on by government (Charlton, 1991).

Although bureaucrats seem to be at the forefront of policy making, politicians also seem to have influence in determining social policy. The literature points to the fact that in some instances there exists some political maneuvering by politicians in social policy. Evidence attesting to political expediency as a determinant of policy abounds. It is argued that some social policy interventions are only introduced by politicians to 'buy' electoral votes. For instance, Mwansa et al. (1998) point out that the ARADP was introduced in 1974 by the ruling BDP government so that it could perpetuate its political hegemony in rural areas. Another incident where politics is thought to have influenced social policy is unraveled by Picard (1987). According to Picard (1987), a presidential directive was issued ordering the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to ensure that RADP projects were visible on the ground by September 30th 1974, which was 21 days before the general election. Molutsi and Holm (1990) provided a case of just such an incident where the ruling party gained political mileage; the cabinet decided without any consultation with the Ministry of Education to provide free secondary education, simply because the opposition had been making political capital out of such a promise. It is apparent that, in this instance, the ruling party used its position not to follow the normal protocol of policy making.

Social policy formulation in Botswana has also been influenced by donors. At independence, some social policies have been formulated either as sole government initiatives or with the intervention of external donor agencies. For example, initially RADP (then the Basarwa Development Programme) was funded by external donors such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD). SIDA was the main RADP donor from 1979 until 1987. From then on, NORAD became the main funder of the programme which went through several name changes and changes in focus. Although the government regularly changed the name and focus of the programme, mainly from an ethnic focus to focusing on the remoteness of the beneficiaries, NORAD technically accepted and supported these changes. It nevertheless emerged later that, although NORAD previously had accepted the change of focus, the ethnic definition of the target group was an important factor to them. This is evidenced by a strong tendency in both NORAD and its

bureaucracy in implementing the ARADP to think and speak about the target group in ethnic terms (Michelsen Institute, 1995). Also, NORAD at some point proposed that the Accelerated Remote Area Development Programme (ARADP) should also cover Basarwa squatters in and around the established villages in the eastern parts of Botswana. The Michelsen Institute (1995) further indicated that, in all NORAD documentation, ARADP was/is referred to as a minority programme or occasionally as a programme for the aboriginal or indigenous population of Botswana. This happened despite the change of focus from ethnicity to remoteness. These incidents demonstrate that NORAD placed much importance on the ethnic focus even though they agreed with the change to remoteness.

One of the agreements between NORAD and the Government of Botswana under the RADP was to safeguard the San's legal rights to their land. Regardless of this agreement, the government later devised an initiative to hand over land allocated to the San to a cattle syndicate for commercial development. Upon realising that areas of Gantsi land would be allocated for commercial development without considering the rights of the San to that land, NORAD doubted the Ministry of Local Government's commitment to shielding the Basarwa's land rights. This incident caused much friction between NORAD and the government, such that NORAD decided to reduce its funds and length of funding (Michelsen Institute, 1995). This incident and others that followed left bad feelings with NORAD, such that later they did not extend funding but, instead, withdrew.

The strained relationship between NORAD and the Government of Botswana prompts us to consider the extent to which donors influence policy making. The literature shows that policies drawn up with the intervention of donors more often than not reflect the ideology of the sponsoring government and not so much the ideology of the home government (Mphinyane, 2002). This does not come as a surprise because each government has its particular ideology of development and sometimes when you are the funder you have to ensure that your money does what you consider to be important. In this instance, it is clear that the government had a different agenda from that of NORAD, making it difficult to pursue all agendas. It is observed, however, that currently for Botswana there is less intervention from donors in policy making as the country

has developed economically and become a middle income country. Thus, many donors have pulled out of Botswana to help those countries that are found to be poorer (Maipose, 1997). As such, social policy is commonly sponsored from the government coffers and reflects the ideology of the government of the day.

It is important to note at this stage that even when the government is the main policy formulator, there are sometimes external pressures that call for policy evaluation or formulation. It appears that external impetus has two sides, as 'negative influence' or as something that can disrepute the government in international circles and deserving action. According to Mphinyane (2002), the government, as the main policy formulator, considers impetus from outside as 'influence' mainly on sensitive issues such as San issues. One such example is the San relocation from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, which saw much external intervention. According to Mphinyane (2002) the government interpreted the foreign intervention as 'negative influence' on the San and as being neither their interest nor struggle; as such the government went ahead and moved the San. This issue becomes murky when the local voice is not audible enough, as is the case here.

The other instance when the government seemed to view external support as 'negative influence' was when NORAD funded a conference for the San activists, who were in the process of forming a San advocacy and interest group. It later emerged that a senior government official blamed NORAD for Basarwa ethno-political sentiments and for encouraging the secession of the Basarwa from the republic (Michelsen Institute, 1995). This was problematic since NORAD had worked with the government on related matters, but now was working with a particular group; the government found it suspect.

However, there are several cases where the government did not see external impetus as a bad influence. Sometimes the government seeks to protect her image in the international community and responds to pressure from outside by considering intended policy action. For example, the government abandoned the Southern Okavango Integrated Water Development Project as a result of local and international pressure. Greenpeace International and other local NGO's wrote to the Botswana government and on its invitation undertook a study tour



and recommended shelving the project pending further scientific enquiry, which the government did.

## **2.3 The Remote Area Development Programme: An Overview**

‘If development means allowing individuals to lead lives they have reason to value, then the life of the human person becomes the benchmark against which development is measured’ (Grech, 2012)

What is now known as the RADP started as a response to problems caused by commercial farming in the Ghanzi areas of Botswana. According to Saugestad (2001), the RADP started in 1974 as a Bushman/*Basarwa* Development Programme; it was the government’s effort to nurse the difficult situation faced by people who were displaced by the development of freehold ranches in the Ghanzi district. Since the majority of the people who were stripped of their land rights in favour of commercial farming in the Ghanzi area were San, this meant that the San either had to stay on in the farms as labourers or find somewhere else to go (Hitchcock, 2002). In response to this situation, the government decided that the San should be allocated land to practice agriculture and live the kind of ‘normal’ lives followed by the mainstream ethnic groups. As such, the Bushman/*Basarwa* Development Programme’s aim was to help the San adapt to the economy of the mainstream *Tswana* society (Nthomang, 2002). Although the government defended this ‘adaptation’ as integration, some argued that it had assimilation overtones (see Molebatsi, 2002).

In 1978, the Bushman/*Basarwa* Development Programme was broadened to include other ethnic groups. This led to the programme’s change of name as it was no longer focusing on the ethnicity of beneficiaries but on the location of beneficiaries. The programme now came to be known as the Remote Area Development Programme. It should be noted however that the objectives of the programmes did not change greatly at this stage. Although the programme has now changed its beneficiaries to include other groups, the San have been specially singled out as the target group which will be given a waiver for the programme’s eligibility criteria. For instance, any individual who is San by

origin, irrespective of his/her place of residence, will be eligible to benefit from the programme (see Government of Botswana, 2009, p.8). Although covering those San who live in established villages is an acknowledgement that these San experience more or less the same situations as those San in remote areas, the chief concern should be whether the programme serves the needs of the intended recipients. The issue probably goes beyond the number of San enrolled in the programme, to whether the programme is addressing their felt development needs, which may be influenced by a particular way of life. In regard to this, Saugestad (2001) has warned that, in trying to be all things to all people, culture neutral policies have become culture blind and deprive the target group's cultural identity.

Since its inception in the 1970s, the programme's intentions of integrating the San community into the mainstream *Tswana* groups by economically empowering them has not gone without challenges from different scholars.

For instance, challenging the integration mission pursued by the RADP, Saugestad (2001, p.52) warns that the old belief that integration will be achieved by treating all citizens in exactly the same way disadvantages the already underprivileged groups because they are in a position of powerlessness. Furthermore, Molebatsi (2002) is concerned that, although integration seems to be the main concern, the term is not clearly defined in the policy document which raises assimilation overtones. The difference between assimilation and integration is that, with assimilation, there is an emphasis on the adoption of traits belonging to another culture, which replace those of the former culture (Ricento, 2006). In this instance, the San will be required to abandon their culture and lifestyle for the culture and lifestyle of the mainstream *Tswana* groups. According to Esman (2004, p.157) integration is close to assimilation in that both promote the blending of cultures and nationalities in one society:

Assimilation, however, implies that newcomers as well as indigenous minorities are to be absorbed by the host society without leaving any mark on that society. Integration, by contrast, is closer to the melting pot metaphor, implying that each wave of new arrivals makes its unique contribution to the ever-evolving whole. Elements of ethnic

cultures survive, but these are shared by others, while all participate in an increasingly common culture and mixed society.

As argued by other scholars (Molebatsi, 2002; Saugestad, 2001; Young, 1995) the overtones of assimilation within the RADP are accelerated by the way it positions its strategy of development. As observed by Saugestad (2001), the RADP negates everything that is not *Tswana* in its conception of its intended beneficiaries which in a way imposes the outsider's life into the lives of the remote area dwellers. Nthomang (2004) observed that 'integration (assimilation) has been the main approach or purpose of the RADP as the government views the Basarwa's problems as being rooted primarily in their rejection of, exclusion from or inability to enter mainstream society' (p.6).

The literature also suggests that the programme, since its inception, has adopted a top-down development approach which adds to its ineffectiveness towards the San. Saugestad (2001, p.164) explained that 'the design of the Remote Area Development Programme may be well-intended, but it is nevertheless top-down: initiated from a ministry, delegated to the district councils, and dispensed to communities'. The problem with programmes and projects that are top-down in nature is that they make the intended beneficiaries objects of development and might not even address their felt needs and priorities. In fact, Calhoun (2010) noted that development decisions made by professionals and those in power often misunderstand or oversimplify issues and so are devising inappropriate solutions. Some scholars relate this form of development to colonialism, where the dominant group imposes upon others their ideology of life. For example, Ife (2010, p.72) contended that 'the imposition of a developmental agenda on a community is characteristic of the colonialist project, where the coloniser is seen as having superior knowledge, wisdom and expertise and as therefore being able to impose their agenda on others'. In the context of the RADP, Nthomang (2004) corroborated that the programme promotes colonial forms of development practice that privilege the world view, interests and needs of the *Tswana* dominated government rather than those of the San. As a result, the RADP has been positioned to construct development as a negation of *Tswana* norms as it appeals to give its

beneficiaries traits they lack, but which are found in the *Tswana* mainstream society.

It seems that the RADP interprets San poverty and ‘underdevelopment’ in terms merely of a socio-economic problem that can be solved by the simple provision of basic needs. Looking at it the other way, one could ask whether the problems are caused by being poor or being San. If it is being poor, why then are the problems persisting despite the provision of food and shelter? Also, are the San experiencing and interpreting poverty in the same way as the other groups? It should be noted that as the underclass of the underclass, their poverty might be experienced differently from other remote area dwellers and treating them as equals might not be helpful. According to Good (1999), poverty is not an entity in and of itself, but a consequence of inequalities. So it might mean that the programme should look at poverty in a more holistic manner than viewing it pathologically where the problem is diagnosed and treatment prescribed. Ife (2010) argues that, where community development starts with a problem, it is a sure recipe for disempowerment as it leads people in the community to see themselves as somehow lacking or deficient. Probably this is where it should be acknowledged that, while the government’s provision of food and social amenities maintains San’s lives, it has turned them into dependents of the state as they now believe that they are unable to provide for themselves (Nthomang, 2002).

Several studies which were undertaken to study the San and the RADP concentrated more on how the programme’s change from an ethnic focus to a locality focus affected the San and on the failed implementation of the programme (Molebatsi, 2002; Nthomang, 2002). The study undertaken by Nthomang (2002) looked into the understanding of the San’s development experiences and aspirations. The study analysed issues from the multiple colonisation perspective and was generally concerned with how the RADP uses an ‘internal colonisation’ approach to develop the San. Critical social theory, merged with participatory development theory that the current thesis has explored, are appropriate to give another side of the story and an alternative to the development of indigenous people, particularly the San. Critical social theory is appropriate here because of its ability to critique the social order and

provide tools for emancipation, an aspect that is lacking from the internal colonialism model.

The Ministry of Local Government (2010) also undertook an RADP impact study, which explored the impact of the RADP on the livelihoods of remote area dwellers. The study did not specifically look into the San, who the current study is exploring. Studying the impact on the remote area dwellers does not necessarily consider the peculiar problems which arise from the San's indigeneity. Young (1995) contended that lumping indigenous people and poor people together in the same category diverts attention from the special development needs of the indigenous people and the way they are impoverished in the first place. The assumption that the solution to major development constraint and poverty reduction for the San rests with their geographical location needs to be challenged.

## **2.4 Who are the San?**

The San have been identified as the first group of people to occupy the Sub-Saharan region, including Botswana (Wagner, 2006). According to Young (1995), the San form part of the fourth world, the world of the most underprivileged and oppressed people. They are a group below even other members of the unskilled working class or landless peasantry who are excluded from the affluence and participation variously enjoyed by most of the rest of the population (Good, 1999). Although a larger population of San is found in Botswana, there are also San in a few Southern African countries such as Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The San everywhere have lost their dignity and they live in poverty while they struggle for existence and recognition. According to Le Roux (1999b), p.3, throughout the region the San are struggling to adapt to modern life and a cash economy; poverty and all its social ills is threatening their physical survival and hindering their development. They are disparaged by most people from the mainstream groups as they struggle to retain their lifestyle and culture. Although the San are known to be indigenous, the official position of the government is that no group is more indigenous than another. Based on this argument, the San are not officially recognised as an indigenous group in Botswana (Young, 1995).

Hence, they do not enjoy any rights accorded to indigenous people and as such they have fallen victim to assimilation.

In Botswana, it is difficult to enumerate the population of the San because the population census is not collated according to ethnicity. However, it is suspected that the San account for only 4% of the Botswana population (Hitchcock & Holm, 1993). The San in Botswana are known by different names which are sometimes derogatory and sometimes indicate their economic status. According to Good (2008), they are a people without a self-given name; those that are appended to them are those of their masters which are all, to a varying degree, derogatory. In Botswana, the San are commonly known as *Basarwa*. Even though people in the mainstream mostly use the term '*Basarwa*' with a demeaning overtone, some San continue to address themselves as *Basarwa*. According to Le Roux and White (2004), the term *Basarwa* carries the negative connotation of 'those without cattle and who therefore have no value or status'. Also, Mutanyatta (1996) criticised the term *Basarwa* on the grounds that it has been used to describe the people's socio-economic status rather than the unique and rich cultural identity of the San people. Some San have revealed that the term *Basarwa* came from the term '*Basaruwe*' which simply means people who do not have (The Basarwa Post, 1999). However, a meeting of San representatives adopted as a preferred reference to the San the term San (Saugestad, 2001). This study intends to use the names interchangeably as the San continue to address themselves using all the names.

Originally, the San lived in small groups of 25-50 persons consisting usually of five or six families (Hitchcock, 1978). Today most San live in small settlements of fewer than 500 people. The settlement arrangement has been initiated by government as it is believed it will help with integrating the San into the mainstream society as government provides social services such as schools and clinics (Hitchcock & Holm, 1993; Nthomang, 2002). Within this arrangement, the San largely earn a living through a combination of foraging, agriculture, livestock raising, handicraft sales and wage labour (Hitchcock & Holm, 1993). The San face many socio-economic challenges, such that sometimes government intervention is desirable. Many of them live under impoverished conditions. They are commonly faced with social ills such as heavy drinking, low participation in

education, unemployment, poverty, exploitation, lack of land rights, marginalisation and prejudice.

The San people in Botswana are mostly concentrated in the remote areas. However, those who live among the mainstream ethnic groups in the not so remote areas or towns, have assimilated into those groups such that they do not identify themselves as San. This is probably exacerbated by the marginalisation and victimisation of the San people by those who belong to the mainstream ethnic groups. Hence, as a way of being considered as an equal human being, they tend to disassociate themselves with being San.

Historically, the San's livelihood has depended on hunting animals and gathering wild fruits as they were a hunter-gatherer society. However, due to contemporary changes, they are no longer in a position to lead either a hunter-gatherer life or a nomadic life. They have been moved out of national parks, which were their homes, and this has disrupted their hunting and gathering lifestyle. Their hunting of wild animals is now restricted by the conservation policies that are in place. As a result, currently most San livelihoods are dependent on government hand-outs; some scholars argue that most policies have turned the San into helpless clients with entrenched dependency on the government for their livelihood (Young, 1995).

## **2.5 The San as indigenous people: A contested belonging**

In this section, the tensions that exist in the development debate on indigeneity are interrogated. Although some scholars (Spivak, 1988; Kuper, 2003) want us to believe that indigeneity is a fluid concept which has no place in the current development debate, by the arguing that issues of indigeneity are just marginalisation matters, core issues will continue to be denied the attention they deserve and indigenous people such as the San will be failed.

While some people demand that indigeneity be celebrated for the success of development for indigenous people such as the San, some people warn of oppressive possibilities and dismiss indigeneity as a concept used by some groups

just to gain a 'seat at a table' in negotiations with governments (Lee, 2006). Academics and governments have often questioned the nature of 'indigeneity' from different angles and every day the tension in defining who is indigenous continues to intensify across the world. Although the International Labor Organisation (ILO) convention 169 gives guidance on who is indigenous, this instrument has not abated the contention (Bowen, 2000; Niezen, 2003). It does not specifically give a definition of who is indigenous, but it provides clear guiding principles and considers self-identification as paramount. Amongst the elements that the convention suggests to determine indigeness and indigeneity are traditional lifestyles; a culture and way of life that is different from the other segments of the national population (for example, in their ways of making a living, language and customs); their own social organisation and political institutions; and living in historical continuity in a certain area, or living in an area before others 'invaded' or came to the area.

While the convention tries to give a holistic view to indigeneity, some scholars only argue indigeneity in terms of first occupancy which weakens and oversimplifies the indigenous claim because occupancy cannot be proved in the first place (Bowen, 2000). As Fowler (2011) asserts, the prior occupancy concept should be a proxy for a much fuller claim because indigenous people did not simply inhabit the land in the same way that a businesswoman might inhabit the land upon which her house is built.

Kuper (2003) enters the debate by arguing that, if indigeneity is defined in terms of first occupancy, some people should have privileged rights while others are simply guests who are expected to behave accordingly. To this end, Kuper equates indigeneity to reverse ethnocentrism. However, Kuper's argument does not hold because most supporters of indigeneity are not arguing for domination by the indigenous but for a share of recognition. Even if this were their desire, indigenous people do not even hold the power to conquer the conquerors. Indigeneity is further condemned by Spivak (1988) who asserts that using indigeness to argue cases for marginalised groups is surrendering to 'nostalgia for lost origins', assuming that native cultures can be restored to their undisturbed pre-colonial form. Spivak's assertions are problematic for two reasons. First, marginalisation in itself is experienced differently and has



different roots, such that lumping indigenous people together as marginalised people might not address their plight specifically (Young, 1995; Saugestad, 2001). Secondly, indigeneity is not calling for restoration of the past as culture is not static. The issue is to find a way to accommodate the way of life of indigenous groups so that they enjoy the freedom that other groups are enjoying.

Although the concept of indigeneity seems to be handled differently in some first world countries, it is still a problematic concept which raises political tensions. For instance, although New Zealand enacted the Treaty of Waitangi, which recognises Maori as a protected group who have claim to a distinctive constitutional position, other New Zealanders are less enthusiastic, often arguing instead for a single system of representation based on equal rights for all New Zealanders (Durie, 2002). Further, the literature shows that this treaty has not changed the situation of the Maori very much as it has failed to resolve unequal power relationships between the mainstream society and the Maori (Humpage, 2005, p.177). At least in this instance the government has taken a step to officially acknowledge indigeneity of the Maori.

It is, however, clear that some governments, especially African and Asian, interpret indigeneity with suspicion: a struggle to reverse the roles of domination which cannot be allowed (Colchester, 2002). In Malaysia, there is even a law that prohibits public discussion of the issue of indigenous status as it is considered seditious (Gomes, 2004, p.10). Arguing against this type of action, Kidd (2008) states that these governments have become the very thing they once fought against in colonial times; an oppressor of the less powerful groups. In turn, this oppression has been embedded into the legal and political institutions of governments so that colonial relations are duplicated internally (Loomba, 1998).

The San in Botswana did not escape from the indigeneity conundrum. Although San in some quarters are recognised as indigenous, this term has come to raise political tensions as the Botswana government seems uncomfortable with the term and its demands. As a result, the government's official position is that the San, although satisfying all the tenets of the ILO convention 169, are not

recognised as indigenous and the government has not ratified the convention. According to the government:

We have pointed out that in our context, all Batswana are indigenous to the country, except those who have acquired citizenship through naturalisation. The fact that Basarwa are believed to be among the first inhabitants of this country does not, in our view, make them more indigenous than other ethnic groups in the country. (Government of Botswana 1993, p.29)

The government further explained that giving the San a status of minority will bring about divisiveness in society and that, in fact, it is in the best interests of the San not to be singled out as a special case, as this may give rise to negative, even racist, reactions from other segments of society (Saugestad, 2001). Ditshwanelo (2006) negates this claim as just 'formal equality' which is based on seeing everyone in the same form or image while treating people equally does not make people equal in terms of results. Even though the government claims that it intends to protect the San from ridicule and oppression, this is exactly what it is perpetuating. The fact that the San are treated just like everybody else is the very reason they are being ridiculed; because they are neglected, thus poor and oppressed. Scholars such as Young (1995) and Saugestad (2001) contend that, in as far as development debate ignores the history of the indigenous people, development will always side-line them and marginalise them even further. This is consistent with the conclusions of Beneria-Surkia (2004) in a study of the indigenous people of Bolivia. Beneria-Surkia (2004) concluded that development for the Guaranis in Izoceño continues to be unsuccessful as the development models are not sufficiently adapted to the local socio-cultural contexts and livelihoods.

In conclusion, indigeneity has evolved from just being an issue of who came first or last to an issue that potentially affects the development of those groups classified as indigenous. Although the indigenous people are not as pure as in the past, issues of indigeneity need to be negotiated to make development interventions more relevant.

## **2.6 The development discourse**

The idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. Delusion and disappointment, failures, and crimes, have been the steady companions of development and they tell a common story: it did not work. Moreover, the historical conditions which catapulted the idea into prominence have vanished; development has become outdated. But, above all, the hopes and desires which made the idea fly are now exhausted; development has grown obsolete. Nevertheless, the ruin stands there and still dominates the scenery like a landmark. (Wolfgang Sachs, 2010)

### ***2.6.1 The meaning of development***

Development is a closely contested and controversial concept. Development is contested in terms of definition, the route to be taken to achieve its goals. Despite all the contestations, development is presented as a one size fits all fashion, value free in nature, a commodity that all humanity should cherish and desire and a necessity that all should strive to acquire (Young, 1995). The common assumption that development is a good thing and therefore is good for everyone should be questioned and properly assessed most especially when it is applied in a cross-cultural context. According to Rist (2008), different understandings of 'development' depend on how each individual (or group of individuals) pictures the ideal conditions for social existence. This assertion challenges the cross cultural viability of the concept of development.

In as far as development is meant to reach out to communities that are regarded as poor or 'under developed', it has been consistently applied as a neutral concept fitting all contexts. As a result, consciously or unconsciously, development has consistently reflected principles and values of the western world (Sachs, 2010; Turker, 1997). Stone (1989) is concerned that it is as though the world of international development has become like a mirror of imprinted western values, philosophies and interests. However, it is not yet particularly clear how the indigenous people development realities count in the general development processes as their worldview is usually tangential from that of the mainstream society.

From a normative point of view, the term 'development' resonates a constructive and beneficial implication. It is synonymous with progress and modernisation. It is therefore imagined to mean a decline in poverty, inequality and exploitation and an increase in human welfare, prosperity and health (Amstrong & Bennett, 2002). Generally, development is thought of as a means to make a better life for everyone. According to Peet and Hartwick (2009, p.1) 'in the present context of highly uneven world, a better life for most people means, essentially, meeting basic needs; sufficient food to maintain good health and being treated with dignity and respect'. For Remenyi (2004, p.25) 'development is a process of growth towards self-reliance and contentment. It is a process by which individuals, groups and communities obtain the means to be responsible for their own livelihoods, welfare and future'. Although there are several definitions of development, the literature unfortunately tells us less about definitions from indigenous communities. Even studies that were specifically conducted on the San fail to reveal much in this instance. This is one of the central issues that this study intends to explore further, so as to understand how specifically the San in Khwee and Sehunong understand the concept of development.

This discussion on the understanding of development takes us some distance away from simple mechanical definitions of development to fields where the idea is challenged. While some see development as reality, some see it as a myth. Critics of development such as Escobar (1995, p.4) dismiss the good promises of development stating that 'Instead of the kingdom of abundance promised by theorists and politicians in the 1950s, the discourse and strategy of development produced its opposite: massive underdevelopment and impoverishment, untold exploitation and repression. The debt crises, the Sahelian famine, increasing poverty, malnutrition and violence are only the most pathetic signs of the failure of forty years of development'. In his critique of development, Turker (1999) argues that, after more than three decades of development, many areas of the world are worse off today than they were 30 years ago, despite development programmes. According to Dornan and Regan (2012), despite the fact that development is regularly deemed to have failed (especially when viewed from the perspective of the poor), it continues to be

financed, debated, measured, monitored and evaluated; development remains big business.

### ***2.6.2 Development as imperialism: An extension of 'internal colonialism'?***

Imperialism simply refers to the sustenance of unequal economic, cultural and territorial relationships among nations (Escobar, 1995). Critics of development see it as nothing but western imperialism where the west replicates itself within other nations. This might be said of development because it has exclusively relied on one knowledge system: that of the modern west. The dominance of this knowledge system has dictated the marginalisation and disqualification of non-western knowledge systems, such that that which is not western has no place in the development discourse. Thus those who have adopted western views and lifestyles view those who have not as primitive and archaic. As asserted by Tucker (1999, p.1) 'development is the process whereby other people are dominated and their destinies are shaped according to an essentially western way of conceiving and perceiving the world'.

According to Munck and O'Hearn (1999, p.1) 'development is a process whereby the lives of some people, their plans, their hopes, their imagination, are shaped by others who frequently share neither their lifestyle, nor their hopes nor their values'. Freire (1972) opined that it appears that the act of development means that those carrying it out need to go to 'another part of the world' to 'normalise it' according to their way of viewing reality, to make it resemble their world. It is common for development to be seen as synonymous with the western world view because the west is practically defining everything about development. The current conception of development seems to dictate that non-adherence to the requirements of western values automatically exacts the label of 'underdeveloped' and of needing help. In simple terms, therefore, 'there is no development without western values'. With regard to this, scholars such as Escobar (1995) and Tucker (1999) have hence concluded that development is a myth which has been accorded a supernatural status with which to appropriate the mission of the west. As for Sardar (1999, p.44) 'development continues to

mean what it has always meant: a standard by which the west measures the non-west’.

This perspective of development is interesting as it brings about issues of unequal power structures and relations imbued in the theoretical framework adopted in this study. Past studies have indicated that the San’s development is more disempowering than empowering because the dominant *Tswana* groups have had the privilege of defining and creating the development reality for the San, who sit on the lowest social rung (Good, 2008; Nthomang, 2008; Nyathi, 2003). The dominant *Tswana* hegemony surrounding development and specifically the RADP development interventions can be demonstrated by the approach of development adopted by the RADP which negates everything that is non-*Tswana* as ‘un-developed’ (Saugestad, 2001). This perspective of development has however been defended as a way to empower the powerless San, to enable them to reach the same level of development reached by other groups (Ministry of Local Government, 2010, 2012). This move by implication seems to argue that the RADP is meant to transfer the beneficiaries from the periphery of development to the centre where they will have access to the socio-economic benefits enjoyed by other people. However, the San’s understanding of development is a central question that has not been specifically addressed in this instance.

Perhaps, it is now appropriate to try to understand the dichotomy that exists between the majority ethnic groups and the minority indigenous ethnic groups in relation to the discourse of development. It appears that the common dichotomy between developed and underdeveloped countries has now translated into majority ethnic groups assuming the role of ‘developed’ ‘colonising’ countries while the indigenous minorities are relegated to the ‘underdeveloped’ ‘colonies’ who need to take development instructions from the majority ethnic groups. According to Nthomang (2003) this kind of development relationship translates to ‘internal colonisation’. It can be argued that the similarity between development as imperialism and development as internal colonialism is that, in both situations, there are unequal relationships, domination and subjection where for various reasons the ‘core’ imposes itself on the ‘periphery’ whose subsequent development is geared to the needs of the ‘core’. In both situations,

political, cultural and economic power is maintained by naturalising a particular way of seeing the world which everyone should adhere to. According to Nthomang (2003), these views of the world often consciously or unconsciously find their way into the formulation and implementation of social policy and subsequent programmes. Thus, considering the minority status of the San, perhaps much can be learnt from this interplay in terms of understanding how the unequal, colonial relationship with the majority groups has influenced the RADP and its implementation for beneficiaries, particularly the San.

According to Smith (2002), the theory of internal colonialism was designed to counter the diffusion theory or the theory that development would lead to a decline in the importance of ethnicity and the emergence of class consciousness. Further, the concept of internal colonisation dismisses the 'salt water' thesis which holds that colonialism only exists between western and third world countries. According to Hind (1984), internal colonisation maintains that if the defining quality of colonialism is the relationship of domination and subjection between two groups of differing cultures, then one can properly speak of colonialism within a country. Similarly, Smith (2002) argues that colonisation involves a relationship by which members of the colonised group tend to be administered by being managed and manipulated by outsiders in terms of ethnic status within a country. Internal colonisation is actually a concept that dates back to the nineteenth century where it was appropriated by Gramsci and Lenin to describe an unequal exchange between the elite and the masses - or the core and the periphery - within a nation state. In this arrangement, the core and majority seeks to dominate the periphery and minority politically, economically and culturally. Smith (2002) specifically noted that internal colonialism is a structured relationship of domination and subordination which is defined along ethnic or racial lines to serve the interests of the dominant group.

Internal colonialism implies that the colonising power, whether in the form of an ethnic majority or a racial dominating group, creates development policies that both favour them and maintain the status quo whereby they continue to be dominant. Hind (1984) highlights that colonising powers implement policies which constrain, transform or destroy indigenous values, orientations and ways of life. Since the literature (Nthomang, 2003; Saugestad, 2001) demonstrates

that the San represent the ‘periphery’ in Botswana, it is important to establish whether their development is by negotiation or imposition. Perhaps these arguments could be used in trying to understand the development envisaged by the RADP for beneficiaries, especially when it comes to establishing whether the programme resonates with the felt development needs of the San and understanding the consistent failures within the RADP.

### ***2.6.3 Development with identity: Culture in the discourse of development***

Development for a long time has been treated as a trans-cultural process which has little to do with culture. Although development affects all domains of human life, most emphasis has been specifically directed towards economic, political and social dimensions, to the exclusion of cultural considerations. According to Tucker (1999, p.2) ‘In development studies, culture has tended to be regarded as something of an epiphenomenon, secondary in importance to the all-important economic and political domains’. As explained by Mannathukkaren (2009), p.467, the cultural context was underplayed in the development discourse because it was believed that ‘culture did not matter and that culture would mechanistically adjust itself to changes in the economic sphere’. This view of development made the process appear neutral, operating within any specific cultural exigencies. Interestingly, however, anything that was not western was despised and found to be archaic, primitive and even pagan. In fact, Sardar (1999) has observed that tradition and culture has been demonised and is seen as an impediment to modernisation and development.

However, some studies have located the poverty and under-development issues of the indigenous minorities within the failure to acknowledge cultural contexts in indigenous societies. As a result, the guiding principles of development interventions among indigenous people are increasingly expressed in the language of ‘development with identity’. ‘Development with identity’ as espoused by Bage (2007) is an important principle that affirms that cultural distinctiveness is part of the development process. Based on this understanding of culture and development, culture should be understood as the lens through



which societies make meaning of the world and interpret the world, not as an element of under-development.

According to Inglehart and Baker (2000), culture is about relationality; the relationships among individuals within groups, among groups, and between ideas and perspectives. Culture is concerned with identity, aspiration, symbolic exchange, coordination and structures and practices that serve relational ends such as ethnicity, ritual, heritage, norms, meanings and beliefs. Culture, as a way of life, shared beliefs and meanings, varies from society to society and has its own peculiar way of influencing the development process. According to Young (1995, p.5) 'cultural attributes and behavioral norms influence how people perceive the changes which they are being encouraged to adopt'. This is especially true for indigenous societies whose way of life usually results in friction with the process of development. For instance, these societies are required to assimilate in the name of development but when they dissent their dissension is usually seen as problematic to the development practice.

The dissension of indigenous minority cultures such as the San and other indigenous minorities to development compels us to address fundamental issues such as how their way of life is weaved into the development practice. According to Taber (2004), people spontaneously assume that what their culture prescribes is 'natural', so that other ways are by definition 'unnatural', exotic and even perverse. It therefore goes without saying that shared beliefs and meanings are the core fabric of every society and if development is about changing people's lives, surely the relationship between development and culture cannot go ignored. Tucker (1997, p.4) observed that 'where peoples beliefs, ideas, meanings and feelings - in a word their culture - are not taken into consideration and respected, we cannot speak of human development'. The issue however is not only whether culture matters in the development process but how it matters in the whole process. This is indeed one of the gaps that the current study intends to explore.

Chambers (1997) has argued that usually those who have the power to define development prefer to blame those who do not have the power to do so, and come up with explanations and descriptions that will require them to change

their way of life rather than enabling them to choose to change. This is a common situation for most indigenous minorities; they are expected to change their lifestyle for development even when they see no reason to change. According to Tucker (1999, p.11), this is not only cultural elitism, but cultural racism. Similarly, Nthomang (2002) terms the situation ‘internal colonisation’.

However, most studies are not specific about issues of indigenous culture and development. It is not clear how or which cultural aspects should be maintained within development because of the current hybridity of culture, as their culture is not as purely indigenous (Moquin, 2010). For instance, it cannot be claimed that the San’s culture is still pure and has not been affected by current modern events. Thus, locating the aspect of culture within development becomes difficult as culture is not static and ‘uncontaminated’. The assumptions by most studies relating to pure categories and identities should be redirected by understanding from the San which cultural aspects they want to see upheld in their development.

Arguing the ‘under-development’ of indigenous people in terms of their tangential culture has received criticism as a romanticised view. Critics have argued that the indigenous people’s culture, like any other culture, is not static and can adapt to the changes that are taking place in the current development landscape. As indicated by critics (Goncalves, 2006; Ndahinda, 2011; Odysseos, 2004), this is a romanticised view of indigenous people which attracts unnecessary controversy because indigenous people, like everyone else, are not prone to inevitable changes. Ndahinda (2011) pointed out that the essentialised views of indigenous people perceive them as only able to survive in their historical ‘natural’ environment and as being socially and culturally uninterested in and unprepared for participation in the current development prospects. Other commentators such as Goncalves (2006) are also concerned with presenting the indigenous culture in a way that is understood as fixed and unable to adapt to changes. According to Goncalves, most societies and cultures have undergone waves of conquest, invasion and colonisation. According to Ndahinda (2011), what is at stake is not the imminent disappearance of a culture *per se*, but the need for communities to be in control and be able to negotiate their transition at their own pace, under their own steam. As such, development and culture

should be seen as mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive (Deruyttere, 1997).

## **2.7 Policy philosophies for developing indigenous minorities**

Although development along ethnic lines in some countries is prohibited (Rwanda and Malaysia for instance)(see Duncan, 2008), many countries with indigenous people try to engage them in development through different policy philosophies. The policy philosophies usually shed light on how the government perceives indigenusness in relation to the discourse of development. Duncan (2008) argued that one way to understand misconceptions about indigenous people is to examine policies and programmes aimed at developing them and the bureaucracies that implement them.

The policy philosophies for developing indigenous people range from the assimilationist model, which envisages that ethnic minorities will be incorporated fully into society and the state through a process of change in which individuals abandon their distinctive linguistic, cultural and social characteristics and take on those of the dominant group, to self-determination where policies accept the potential, and legitimacy, of the cultural and social distinctiveness of ethnic minorities. Many governments that regard the lifestyles of indigenous people as being everything that development is not and believe that development policies will not succeed if they tolerate the culture of indigenous people generally respond to indigenous people with egalitarian, paternalistic and assimilative policies that attempt to address indigenous disadvantage through integration (Cornell, 2005). It is perceived that development through assimilation and integration will make indigenous people appreciate the lifestyle of the dominant groups and assimilate. Thus, development programmes and policies place much emphasis on giving the indigenous people what modern society has, because it is assumed that what the indigenous people have is backward and primitive and as such they should be helped to achieve the socio-economic status of mainstream society, which is considered perfect and desirable. As such, most governments enforce what Tauli-Corpuz terms 'development aggression'. According to Tauli-Corpuz (2005) ,

p.1, 'development aggression refers to the imposition of so-called development projects and policies without free, prior and informed consent of those affected'. As a result of 'development aggression', it becomes evident that development ends up being ineffective as it does not empower the intended beneficiaries as envisaged by policy. Nthomang (2003) argues that, for indigenous people, development programmes and policies have mainly focused on the delivery of social and economic services rather than on empowering them. Similarly, Parnwell (2008) has blamed the paternalistic nature of policies aimed at indigenous people for stifling innovation and self-reliance.

Giving the examples of assimilation policies in Canada and Australia for the Inuit and Aboriginals respectively, Amstrong and Bennett (2002) highlighted that altogether in both countries assimilation was seen as the vehicle for the successful implementation of the externally promoted forms of development for the indigenous groups. This situation is evidenced within education policies where most governments emphasise that the medium of instruction is the mainstream language and the school culture is the culture of the mainstream groups. According to Davis (1999), these policies are/were centrally planned and highly paternalistic; very few of them built on the cultural strengths of the indigenous populations or enlisted their active participation. A very important aspect of this study is to find out how the RADP builds on the cultural strengths of the San and how the San are involved in the programme, in order to understand the intended impact of the programme on their lives.

Some governments have however recorded a change in how they deal with indigenous people. Some policies, at least in principle, now reflect a movement away from an assimilationist or integrationist approach to development towards a 'self-determination' approach which would allow indigenous people to choose for themselves the kind of development they want and the direction the development should take. This concept is not about co-opting indigenous people into the lifestyle of the mainstream, as is the case with assimilation policies. Self-determination instead points to the fact that indigenous people should be involved in issues that affect them and be allowed to manage their own affairs. According to Young (1995, p.36) 'self-determination would, it was assumed, be

accompanied by self-management, a concentration on self-sufficiency, the concept of self-government and a community based development approach’.

The United States of America has adopted the self-determination concept in the development of the native American Indians. This ‘self-determination’ policy framework acknowledges the right of Native Indians to decide for themselves what is best for them (Cornell, 2006). It is unfortunate however that, on the ground, the government interpret the concept as rhetoric, as simply addressing social problems rather than being genuine self-rule. It appears that the government prefers ruling with the natives and has not entirely let go of power, a situation which weakens the approach.

Also, the Sámi or Lapps in Finland enjoy self-determination policies. They even have a Sámi parliament which makes decisions on Sámi issues. However, the Finnish government still has a say in the manner in which Sámi development should happen. Young (1995) indicated that, for the Inuit and First Nations people in Canada, self-determination policy resulted in devolution of centralised bureaucratic control from Ottawa to the ‘bush’. However, it is important to establish the extent to which self-determination is allowed because, if self-determination is not absolute, it will fail to have the impact desired for the development of indigenous people.

The move from assimilation to self-determination has the potential to allow indigenous minorities more options in the discourse of development. However, differences in the interpretation of the concept of self-determination throttles the process. Young (1995) reported that for the Aboriginals in Australia, for instance, self- government implies governing at community level with appropriate resources and the power to decide on the level of these resources that should be used; bureaucratic understanding is that the government will retain financial control and will attempt to enforce a common development model. This means that acceptance of a self-determination policy does not mean that the policy is realised on the ground and we should not be blinded to the underlying trends.

### ***2.7.1 Participatory development***

Participatory development emerged as a paradigm shift in development thinking in the 1960s after it was realised that the top-down, professional led development perspective was ineffective. According to Ledwith (2011), the basic assumption underpinning participation is that human beings are subjects, able to think for themselves, and in doing so transcend and recreate their world. Works that are currently popular in relation to participatory development include Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972) and Robert Chambers' *Whose Reality Counts?* (1997).

In contemporary development debates, community participation has assumed central importance as an essential ingredient for rural development. From a social justice perspective, people must be allowed to actively determine their road to development and be involved at every step, including during decision-making processes. Current practices demonstrate that colonial narratives continue to dominate development policy, which automatically places the 'dominant' into a donor position and indigenous people into a recipient position (Reid, 2011). It is hoped by many commentators that the concept of participation in development can disintegrate the power differentials for equitable development results. However, Cobbinah (2011, p.72) cautions that the extent to which an individual or community can influence a development process depends on the power the individual or community possesses. Looking at the social structure within the Botswana society, it will be interesting to understand how the discriminative structure influences the development landscape of the San. Even though the strength of participatory development theory is based on participation, the framework on its own provides a weak analysis of the contexts necessary for genuine empowerment for communities faced with structural deficiencies that limit access to development resources and social power. Participatory development does not do justice in demonstrating what makes participation for the San difficult in the first place. However, when used with critical social theory, both theories move beyond the models of traditional participation that only work around the existing power structures and provide analyses into the social structure in general: the political, social, cultural and economic.

According to Nelson and Wright (1995), participation should be seen from two perspectives: participation as a means to an end and participation as an end in itself. Nelson and Wright further explained that the former view of participation was as a process whereby local people co-operate and collaborate in development interventions in order to accomplish aims more efficiently, effectively or cheaply. From the latter perspective, community participation is a goal expressed in terms of empowering people to plan and control their own initiatives and thereby providing a more inclusive role in their own development. Parfitt (2004) noted that participation as an end suggests a transformation in power relations between beneficiaries and the drivers of development, with the former being empowered and liberated from a clientelist relation with the latter.

Proponents of participatory development argue that community participation gives development a human-oriented phase as it results in empowerment and the promotion of social justice, equity and democracy (Chinsinga, 2003). The emphasis is mainly on the fact that, when communities participate, they will own development projects and can direct them towards their felt needs. As Makumbe (1996, p.12) reminds us 'no development program however grand, can succeed unless the local people are willing to accept it and make an effort to participate'. Further making a case for participatory development Mikkelsen (1995) reports that participatory development asks development planners, practitioners and researchers to give up what they have until now erroneously considered their prerogative: defining problems and solving them for rural communities. Top-down development efforts are discredited largely because they mostly were externally imposed ideas which did not address the felt needs of those in the grassroots. As Parnwell (2008, p.113) pointed out, 'central development decision-making, often involving city-based 'experts', is generally too detached from local contextual realities. It is frequently encumbered by a 'planning arrogance' where technocrats think they know best what is in the interests of people at the grassroots level'. Chinsinga argues that 'the need to reorient grass-root development strategy is largely based on the perception that, for a project to be sustainable, it must address those problems and aspirations which are identified by the poor themselves' (2003, p.132).

While some celebrate community participation, others warn that community participation is romanticised and should not be blindly trusted (Kothari, 2001; Mohan & Stokke, 2000). Mohan and Stoke note that the different participatory development approaches have a common tendency to construct 'community' as a homogeneous and distinct group which is harmonious. The picture that is painted by proponents of participatory development is that a community is neutral and cooperative, such that everyone within the community is prepared and ready for participation and is well aware of what participation is about. However, Cleaver (2001, p.46) discredits this view by stating that presenting communities as capable of anything (all that is required is sufficient mobilisation) is just a myth perpetuated by development practitioners. Vincent (2003) takes the argument further by cautioning against the idea that focusing on the local, however complexly conceptualised and empowered, can solve local problems. She argues that these problems have at least part of their origin elsewhere and so responsibility for their solution must also lie elsewhere. In fact, Williams (2004) argues that participatory development, as it ignores the externally generated causes of local poverty, only relieves the state and other concerned parties from taking responsibility for the marginalised groups; any project failure is displaced from the macro-level concerns and re-localised onto the people as bad participants and non-participants.

Cooke and Kothari (2001) further criticise participatory development for maintaining the centrality of external agents while at the same time denying the value of outsider knowledge. According to Vincent (2003), although participatory development denies the value of external knowledge, it implies that the locals are engaged in a process already established by others, which means that the underlying implication of participatory development is that people will be joining a game the rules of which have already been decided. Some critics even critique the works of popular proponents such as Robert Chambers, arguing that his work emphasises that participation is externally designed, as his participatory methods are directed at practitioners and not the communities (Williams, 2004).

One important criticism of participatory development is that it uses a language of emancipation to incorporate marginalised populations of the global south



within an unreconstructed project of capitalist modernisation (Williams, 2004). The argument here is that participation agenda operates within the same untampered with environment which means that perhaps we should expect less from it. As Kothari (2001, p.143-5) purports, participatory development stresses the social inclusion of previously marginalised individuals and groups into development processes in ways that bind them more tightly to structures of power that they are not then able to question.

The concept of participation in development is not new in the development space of Botswana. In the past and in the present, it was/is common to consult with communities through the *Kgotla*. The *Kgotla* was/is a platform where collective decision-making about community issues was/is undertaken. On this platform, people were/are generally encouraged to participate in the decision-making processes. This sort of collective participation is reflected even in the language that was commonly used in the *Kgotla*, such as *mmua lebe o bua la gagwe* and *mafoko a Kgotla a mante otlhe*, which means that everyone's opinion has to be heard. These are *Tswana* idioms that are commonly used to encourage collective participation and decision-making. However, even in this instance, participation has never ceased to be a political issue (see Nthomang, 2002). Unequal power relationships were evidenced in the traditional *Tswana* society as only those with social power would actively contribute during *Kgotla* consultations while those belonging to the 'inferior' groups only offered the process a moral bearing. As such, participation now and then is seen as a demonstration of power and control in communities. Available evidence (Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000; Nyathi-Ramahobo, 2008; Nyathi, 2003) shows that the San who are considered as 'inferior' have a limited voice in heterogeneous communities. The San have internalised this structure and rarely question their participation or exclusion. Explaining the San's internalisation of their limited participation, Horkheimer (1982) states that domination is a combination of external exploitation and internal self-disciplining, which allows external exploitation to go unchecked and be considered as the normal order in society.

Although studies on the San claim that active involvement of the San in their development decisions will reduce the challenges that are faced in San development, few have looked into how the social structure can be negotiated

to set up a participatory platform that goes beyond the selective empowerment of the San. This is largely because participation is morally appealing and politically acceptable for people wishing for a fairer world (Green, 2000, p.70). The literature (le Roux, 1999; Saugestad, 2001; Young, 1995) consistently assumes an automatic link between the involvement of San beneficiaries and empowerment. The San have been under the subordination of the superior *Tswana* speaking groups which means that all along most development decisions have been made on their behalf to nurture the 'superior-inferior' structural relations. Few studies tell us how the San understand the notion of participation and power issues embedded within the process of development, based on the inequality and marginalisation they have come to understand as normal. Analysing the San's participation by using both the participatory development lens and the critical social theory lens provides an understanding of participation that is not only geared towards empowerment, but participation that acknowledges disempowerment and how institutional and relational structures maintain disempowerment, the very problem that participation was made to solve.

### ***2.7.2 Multiculturalism: Managing ethno-cultural diversity in development***

Multiculturalism has become a popular model for managing ethno-cultural diversity in the development process. According to Meer and Modood (2011), multiculturalism is a 'polysemic' concept and authors cannot be held entirely responsible for the variety of ways in which the term is interpreted. This is something that Bhabha (1998, p.31) also noted; he argued that multiculturalism has a tendency to be appropriated as a 'portmanteau term' with a variety of contested meanings. The term 'multiculturalism' can be used as a demographic descriptive concept to highlight the existence of ethnically or racially diverse segments in a population (Inglis, 1995). On the other hand, the term has a programmatic political usage to refer to programmes and policy initiatives designed to respond to and manage ethnic diversity. Although the term is contested, one area of consent is that multiculturalism is closely associated with identity politics, political power and economic power, all of which in one way or another are related to socio-economic development. Anderson (1999), in relating

multiculturalism to the discourse of development, argued that multiculturalism is a matter of economic interest and political power; it demands remedies to economic and political disadvantages that people suffer as a result of their minority status. Multiculturalism as policy, as an ideology and as an idea is viewed to be an important 'barometer' to the shape taken by development (Imre, nd) as it helps to locate power relations within development practice.

Multiculturalism is commonly described as cultural pluralism where many cultures can peacefully co-exist without any one culture dominating the others. From this perspective, it is believed that all groups have equal access to social and economic resources and are equally valued in society. Thus, multiculturalism as policy and ideology celebrates heterogeneity against homogeneity and mono-culturalism. According to Castles (2000, p.61):

a widely accepted contemporary thrust of what multiculturalism denotes, includes a critique of the myth of homogeneous and mono cultural nation states, and an advocacy of the right of minority cultural maintenance and community formation, linking these to social equality and protection from discrimination.

According to Rosado (1996), multiculturalism is a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognises and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organisation or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organisation or society. According to Jupp, McRobbie, and York (2001, p.807) as a policy concept, multiculturalism:

is the public acceptance of immigrants and minority communities as distinct communities, which are distinguishable from the majority population with regard to their language, culture and social behavior and which have their own associations and social infrastructure.

It seems that multiculturalism in all its usage proposes equality for all groups in the society which is problematic because, to start with, even the term 'equality' is problematic; there is no consensus as to what equality means because it is subjective (Kymlicka, 2002a). Also, multiculturalism as a policy concept to deal with diversity does not seem to acknowledge the power issues that communities

are hinged on; the assumption of equality seems to be based on a society that is peaceful and neutral. Hence, multiculturalism as a policy initiative is weakened by not questioning the social structure in order to understand the core issues that are embedded in the diversities. Moreover, treating people equally, as suggested by the multiculturalism policy concept, may not give rise to equal results because equality of opportunity is negotiated in a playground that is not level; some ethnic groups have been privileged and so obviously they start in a better position, which makes equal opportunities just rhetoric. For instance, equal educational opportunities for the San and use of Setswana as a medium of instruction may privilege the mainstream and disadvantage the San, even though they have schools built in their areas.

When multiculturalism is viewed as an offshoot of democratic principles, the multiculturalism debate can be viewed as government's commitment to recognise all the tribes and cultures in the development process. In this instance, the state acknowledges that, while there is a cultural core to the state, other numerous groups also need recognition by the bureaucracy of the state. Parekh (2000) takes this view further by explaining that, however rich it may be, no culture embodies all that is valuable in human life and develops the full range of human possibilities. Different cultures thus correct and complement each other, expand each other's horizon of thought and alert each other to new forms of human fulfillment. Donald and Ratanssi (1992) highlight the fact that multiculturalism has the benefit of allowing different communities to be acknowledged and valued with a new official respect. From this perspective, it means that when communities and ethnicities are officially recognised, their interests and desires will be taken on board in order to avoid inappropriate development efforts. These scholars remind us that ethnicity and group identity are all too frequently subjected to cultural homogenisation in search for what, in essence, is an incorrectly identified development. The problem however with the perspectives of multiculturalism as purported by Donald and Ratanssi (1992) is that they are silent about power dynamics in the society. Different interests imply competition for resources. As such, responding to the diversity of interests and needs in the context of multiculturalism highlights power, which the concept of multiculturalism downplays.

Ignoring diversity in a multicultural society has been found to present significant challenges as groups compete for scarce resources. Baker (1977) cautions that ethnic groups constitute power confrontations in which groups mobilise their resources to contest for control of resources and the institutions through which are allocated or reallocated the resources, power and privilege of that society. Many nation states which are multi-cultured have found themselves engaged in ethnic violence because of skewed development. For example, in Kenya, Nārman (1996) reported that Kikuyu's political and economic strength is rooted in their domination of the higher echelon of development administration under the leadership of Kenyatta who was a Kikuyu. It is reported that, under the leadership of Kenyatta, the ethnic factor was used to promote sectional interests while other groups were overlooked. As a result, later on the other groups were protesting the skewed socio-economic development through violence. Parekh (2006) warns that a successful multicultural society cannot be built on the commitment to any single ethnic or cultural project or the adherence to one particular set of substantive values.

While in Africa multiculturalism relates mostly to ethnicity, the dominant meaning of multiculturalism in Europe and beyond relates to the claims of post-immigration groups (Meer & Modood, 2012). It is imperative to question the uniqueness of the emigrant based ideology of multiculturalism to the African development dialogue, specifically in the Botswana context. This raises an important question: can we learn good practice from this kind of multiculturalism or is it too grandiose for our context? For instance, can introducing the multicultural education adopted by most European countries improve the educational experiences of the San? Whether multiculturalism policies can practically improve the unequal power relations in development remains to be seen.

Despite several weaknesses in multiculturalism, the literature points us to instances where multiculturalism as ideology and policy have made strides in contributing to the development of indigenous minorities in some western democracies. For instance, due to the official recognition and acknowledgement of multiculturalism, a formal Sámi parliament was created in Finland (Kymlicka, 2002b). The parliament is made up of the Sámi and it deals with Sámi issues

from their perspective without them having to fight for recognition in a general parliament. Also, due to the multicultural policy in Australia, there is recognition of the Aboriginal land rights. The renewal of the treaty rights through the treaty of Waitangi in New Zealand is another commendable effort towards officially recognising diversity through multiculturalism policy. The Government of New Zealand has an established department solely devoted to Maori, the Ministry of Maori Development. This ministry was established through an Act of Parliament in 1992. Hence, in New Zealand, Maori development is officially recognised under a special dispensation which acknowledges their unique development needs (Lowe, 2009).

Although in some quarters multiculturalism debate has been viewed as a panacea to insensitive development, the literature shows that in practice much remains unchanged for the indigenous minorities where there is multiculturalism policy in place. Dwyer (1996, p.4) reports that 'development programmes frequently are controlled and administered at the higher levels by members of the politically dominant ethnic group; and most of the fruits of such development flow into the pockets of a tiny ethnic elite or at best are distributed in a limited manner within the same ethnic group'. On a similar note, Donald and Rattansi (1992) argued that within a multicultural society, the celebration of diversity is usually focused on 'superficial' manifestations of culture, thus failing to address the issues of power between minority and majority cultures. It is interesting that, while some view multiculturalism policy debate as demanding remedies for the socio-economic problems of the minorities, for others multiculturalism ideals have diverted attention away from socio-economic disparities, making it even more difficult for the minorities (Hansen, 2006). These revelations probably tell us that it takes more than a multiculturalism policy to engage everyone in the development process. Even discussing the relevance of multiculturalism policy in a capitalist society could be relevant at this point because capitalism is about competition.

It has been revealed that although Australia has a policy on multiculturalism, the indigenous Australians are uneasy with their inclusion within it (Curthoys, 2000). The Aborigines are of the view that Australian multiculturalism only realises a coexistence of cultures, and nothing more critical than that. According to the

Aboriginals, their inclusion in the multicultural policy denies them their specifically different situation and experiences as indigenous Australians, their position as the original inhabitants, their history of dispossession and their continued connection to the land (Curthoys, 2000). Another problem that emerges from the idea of potentially incorporating the Aboriginals within a multicultural debate is related to the fact that, according to multicultural theories, all ethnic and cultural groups inside the nation should occupy equal positions, but the aboriginals are still struggling to promote their rights while white Australians occupy a position of dominance and control over them (Curthoys, 2000). Even 'equality' is a controversial term, revealing little about how the 'equality' relationship will be maintained. These arguments are complicated by the fact that multiculturalism is not a legal issue but a policy issue which is usually open for exploitation.

Canada has not been spared from the problems that cloud multicultural policy. Even though theirs is a unique case, since multiculturalism is enshrined not only in statutory legislation but also in section 27 of the constitution, Canada is still facing the problem of equally engaging indigenous minorities (Kymlicka, 2002). Some scholars argue that this is as a result of an existing 'uneasy conversation' between indigenous issues and multiculturalism. According to Morrissey and Mitchell (1994, p.111), tensions surrounding indigenous people and multiculturalism stem from complications involved in situating Aboriginal identities within a policy of cultural pluralism, which displaces indigeneity by reducing it to the status of 'just another ethnic group'. The other problem with multiculturalism (as an ideology) is that it ignores reality; in society there will always be structural competition, which will not just disappear as a result of valuing cultures equally. According to Harding (1995), multiculturalism is predicated on social order, rather than conflict. It does not recognise, or provide any way of understanding, existing structural disadvantage. While in most instances (in first world countries mostly) multiculturalism has been said to have failed, one still wonders if multiculturalism as policy ideology can be practical for Botswana. Considering the difference in multicultural issues, can multiculturalism work any differently for the San's development? If the San are treated as equals in the development process, will that make them 'equals'?

### ***2.7.3 From multiculturalism to Interculturalism: Negotiating development in an ethno-cultural environment***

The perceived failure of multiculturalism in dealing with issues of diversity led to another new approach to diversity, interculturalism. Unlike multiculturalism, interculturalism emphasises the participation of citizens in a common society rather than cultural differences and different cultures existing next to each other without necessarily much contact or participative interaction (Meer & Modood, 2012). Even though interculturalism is seen as superior to multiculturalism, it has not escaped controversy. Some people discredit interculturalism as an artificial term which differs from multiculturalism in no other way than semantics.

According to Lentin (2005), interculturalism as an ‘updated version’ of multiculturalism is just another way of saying that society should accept cultural diversity while upholding commonly held values. However, Bouchard (2011), p.438 challenges this assertion by corroborating that ‘Interculturalism is not a disguised or ‘underhanded’ form of multiculturalism’. The relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism is described as being more than just coexistence in that interculturalism is allegedly more geared towards interaction and dialogue than multiculturalism, which is mainly ‘groupist’. As such, it appears that proponents of interculturalism have gained impetus from the view that multiculturalism speaks only to and for the minorities and fails to appreciate the majorities. According to Babacan and Babacan (2007, p.31), multiculturalism in practice upholds binary relationships which pigeonholes migrants as people who are permanently marginalised. Goodhart (2004) protested that multiculturalism is asymmetrical in that it not only places too great an emphasis upon difference and diversity, upon what divides us more than what unites us, but also that it ignores the needs of majorities.

Moreover, Lawrence and Dua (2005) commented that multiculturalism has been known to anticipate a pluralist state, which renders notions of indigeneity unviable, or to merely celebrate indigeneity as a quaint culture of the past to be dusted off at the opening ceremonies of conferences and events. However, for the purposes of the current study, interculturalism, like multiculturalism, has



failed to address the issues of power and inequality that can unravel the development problems faced by the San among the dominant *Tswana*. It is not clear how the RADP for instance can adopt the principles of interculturalism and improve the San's development chances. It is difficult to apply this concept in the context of the San because it assumes that cultures will be harmonious and exist at the same level. This is difficult to fathom because the social structure is naturally evolving in processes of inequality which cannot be overlooked.

Interculturalism emphasises the importance of integration and exchange of culture in a multi-directional manner. As explained by Booth (2003), interculturalism is concerned with the task of developing cohesive civil societies by turning notions of singular identities into those of multiple ones, and by developing a shared and common value system and public culture. It is thus clear that interculturalism unlike multiculturalism calls for an intertwining of cultures rather than for cultures to exist singularly; people from different cultures interact and learn about each other's cultures. The assumption that can be made at this point therefore is that multiculturalism appears to encourage tolerance while interculturalism encourages acceptance and dialogue. In this context, tolerance is interpreted to come with a disclaimer: 'I tolerate or 'put up' with other people's culture just because I am left with no option; it's a policy or a requirement'. However, with acceptance and dialogue, one accepts other people's cultures because it is the right thing to do and there is some form of negotiation going on. Acceptance and dialogue argues in favour of changing the institutional framework with a view to accommodating not only individual difference but also the collective needs of the minority (Triandafyllidou, 2011). It thus means that acceptance encourages institutional framework policies to change in order to accommodate difference, not the 'other' changing to fit into the framework.

This interpretation of tolerance and acceptance in relation to multiculturalism and interculturalism reveals much; it can be arguably said, as a government, that the way you view other people's culture can determine the extent to which you include them in the development process. Looking at tolerance as an act which is 'unidirectional', Mirchandani and Tastsoglou (2000) note that this concept of tolerance in multiculturalism discourse is premised on the majority-

minority model whereby the majority group tolerates the minority group. If you tolerate the cultures of others, it is assumed that you have the ability and the right to determine the extent of this toleration to the 'other'; to 'tolerate' does not mean to perform 'dialogue'. This will therefore put a ceiling on what can be tolerated, and the burden of adaptation is mainly placed on the minorities.

#### **2.7.4 Multiculturalism and development in Botswana**

In Botswana, multiculturalism is mainly a result of ethnicity. However, ethnicity has been overlooked in the development space of Botswana and is seen as an obstacle to development. In emphasising the perceived irrelevance of ethnicity to development, Hettne (1996) argues that ethnicity has been a neglected dimension in development theory and claims to ethnic identity are thus seen as anti-development. Similarly, Stavenhagen (1986) sees the neglect of the ethnic question in development thinking not as an oversight but as a paradigmatic blind spot. Ethnic identity in Botswana is downplayed because the government sees it as a hindrance to a development model that embraces nationalism where everyone is adhering to a common identity of a *Motswana*. For a long time, the government succeeded in avoiding the political sensitivity of having to deal with development along multicultural and ethnic lines. It has managed to largely conform to a 'neutral' state model where it appears that being quiet about multiculturalism is a panacea to nation building and equality. However, due to the unequal statuses assumed by different ethnicities, this 'neutrality' seems to have privileged the dominant ethnic groups since it is their values that are central in development. Indeed, both the degree to which Setswana is now the predominant language and the acceptance of the popular view of Botswana as ethnically homogeneous reflect the success of the politically dominant *Tswana* in asserting their cultural hegemony (Solway 2002, p.715). Based on this, while other countries address multiculturalism through specific policies, Botswana has adopted a nationalism model which pursues national identity, thus being silent about diversity. Downplaying issues of diversity is well reflected by the RADP. It does not seek to address the specific needs of its intended beneficiaries, but rather uses 'remoteness' to address them. Solway (2002) cautions that the determination to not officially acknowledge ethnic diversity elides ethnically delineated injustice rather than avoids it, and complicates any attempts at

redress. This observation perhaps leads to the question of whether nationalism principles can exist alongside multiculturalism principles. Is it possible to adopt multiculturalism policy while simultaneously pursuing nationalism? If the San's specific needs are specifically addressed by development does it mean that nationalism will be compromised? Babacan and Babacan (2007) are quick to point out that multiculturalism undermines national identity, challenges core values and is divisive and a threat to social cohesion in Australia. Since Australia's multiculturalism is more about immigrants while Botswana's multiculturalism is more about ethnic diversity, it will be interesting to locate this fact within the Botswana context.

The way that diversity and multiculturalism is dealt with in Botswana is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, it seems that the dispositions of the majority groups tend to saturate the fabric of daily social, political and cultural life. As such, the state apparatus is hinged on the dominant's core values which find their way into the development space of the minority groups. In as far as ethnic minority groups such as the San are not prohibited from engaging in their own cultural practices, their culture and practices are relegated to the private sphere while the public sphere is a preserve of the dominant *Tswana* (Solway, 2002). The core *Tswana* values that are pursued in the nationalism model to a larger extent are the values of the major tribes, not of minority ethnic tribes such as the San. This state of affairs can potentially perpetuate the power inequalities that skew development benefits to some groups at the expense of others. For example, the 'ethnically neutral' stance of the government, as reflected in sections 77-79 of the constitution (which list only *Tswana* speaking groups as major tribes which should have representation in the House of Chiefs), is one way of skewing development resources in favour of the dominant *Tswana* and under-privilege non-*Tswana* speaking groups. According to Solway (2002), to many these sections seem to communicate the message that ethnic equality is fine as long as the *Tswana* remain 'more equal' than others. It should be noted that, although the 'minority' groups are referred to as minorities, it is not an issue of numbers but an issue of social construct and former subjugation. In fact, Gladney (1998) encapsulates this point precisely by reminding us that majorities are made, not born. Ethnically and culturally, societies make and mark their

majorities and minorities under specific historical, political and social circumstances. As such, in the interests of this study, it will be interesting to understand how the San understand the role that has been played by historical, political and social circumstances in their poverty and 'under development'.

Another problem that emerges from the nation building approach in Botswana is that it lumps the San with other ethnic groups just as simply another ethnic group. The process of nation building discourages ethnic identities, which in reality plays a very important role in the matter of the redistribution of wealth and national resources in a country (Schwerdt, 2009). This is problematic because the San are not just an ethnic group found in Botswana; they are an indigenous ethnic group that leads a very different life from everybody else, a group that suffers from inequality and marginalisation and, importantly, they are an indigenous group. The nationalism model while employing 'all Batswana' rhetoric has failed to reconcile key issues in the development of the San. As an ethnic minority of the minorities, the San have development issues that are peculiar to them; thus, lumping them together with other groups might overshadow their peculiar development issues. This is in fact stressed by Lawrence and Dua (2005) when they warned that indigenous people risk becoming smaller and paler islands within a multicultural sea, always watching each wave of newcomers establish themselves on their homeland.

## **2.8 Development of the indigenous minorities: emerging issues**

The literature is showing a common trend whereby the rights of indigenous people are disregarded in the name of development (Kymlicka, 2002a). It is evident that their rights to land, political identity, cultural identity, health and income and livelihood are rarely considered in the development practice. According to the United Nations (2009), dominant development discourse does not adequately respond to the aspirations and needs of indigenous people. Major development projects often do not take into account fundamental interests of indigenous people and result in violations of their human rights. As such, the literature suggests that the emerging issues concerning indigenous people in

development reflect a poverty trend, forced development models and problems with education.

### ***2.8.1 Indigenous people and poverty***

The attention given to the poverty of indigenous people as a problem of development has been growing very strong. According to Tauli-Corpuz (2005), being poor and being indigenous tend to be synonymous. As such, there is a growing international consensus that 'development' for the indigenous people means doing something about poverty (Eversole, 2005). However, although much is known about poverty among the indigenous people, few studies report on how the indigenous people themselves understand their experiences of poverty. As Chambers (1997) cautions, any attempt by a person who is not poor to pronounce what poverty is, what its causes are and formulate a solution is bound to lead to an error of judgment. In this instance, this assertion could be said to be true for the San's poverty alleviation through the RADP; the San should be the ones outlining how they experience their poverty and what sort of programmes would be appropriate for their circumstances. Few studies on the San have sought to understand how they understand their poverty experiences and what they imply in the mosaic of power making up the *Tswana* society.

The literature reflects that poverty is generally considered as a welfare problem which can be remedied by improving welfare (Sachs, 2005; Sena, 2010; Sinfield, 2009). This outlook on poverty thus seems in turn to explain poverty as an economic problem, downplaying discrimination and unequal power structures. This view of poverty has been seen as hindering effective development and poverty alleviation for the indigenous people (Ledwith, 2011; Tauli-Corpuz, 2005). As a result, whether in wealthy countries or poor countries, poverty patterns for the indigenous people persist despite development efforts. While living in wealthier countries may mean that the absolute poverty of indigenous people is lower, many still suffer relative poverty vis-à-vis the general populations in which they live (Eversole, 2005). This demonstrates that, although efforts are being made to develop the indigenous people, significant questions still need to be asked about the political and social context of development and the motivations that guide it. Persisting poverty for the indigenous people

produces many more questions than answers. For instance, why should it be that different development initiatives, in different contexts and countries, continue to fail to improve the poor conditions of the indigenous people? This questions whether the poverty of the San should be dealt with from a welfare perspective or as a problem rooted elsewhere. This study does not claim to provide all the answers to the questions arising, but it can trigger a basis for discussion.

The literature shows that, in Malaysia for instance, the Orang Asli who are the aborigines of peninsula Malaysia continue to be stuck in poverty despite the federal government's efforts to develop them. Duncan (2008) notes that 80.8% of the Orang Asli live in poverty and they are the poorest of the poor. Cornell (2005) reports that the Native Indians of the United States of America are the poorest of the poor despite the country being amongst the wealthiest nations. A study by Tauli-Corpuz (2005) indicated that in Ecuador's rural population, of which 90% are indigenous, almost all are living in extreme poverty. The same story is told about the Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander people in Australia. Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1994) further explain that, even in Bolivia where indigenous people comprise over half the national population, indigenous people are still more likely to be poor than non-indigenous Bolivians. This pattern of poverty among the indigenous people leads us to question the effectiveness of development policies and programmes let alone the criteria used by development initiatives to specifically target indigenous people as intended beneficiaries. Perhaps, to unravel the dilemma in developing the indigenous people requires exploring questions of integration, prejudice, control and assimilation and how they set a particular development space for those who are powerless and helpless.

Even though encouraging cases of some indigenous people are reported, challenges are still faced. According to Ringold (2005), the Maori as a whole have made impressive gains and contribute more across the economic, cultural and social spectrum of New Zealand than ever before. Unlike other indigenous people, the Maori are highly integrated into the wider New Zealand economy as workers, owners, investors and consumers and their participation is exponentially growing (Whitehead & Annesley, 2005). However, despite this success story, Maori still experience racism and discrimination from the non-

indigenous people (Humpage, 2005). The case of the Maori then compels us to wonder if the consistent 'under development' of the indigenous people is a problem connected with poverty or a problem purely rooted in being indigenous. Perhaps this situation suggests that an applied development model did not deal adequately with the core issues and instead only massaged them to temporarily abate issues. As explained by Ledwith (2011, p.14) development models that do not follow through to structural levels are ameliorative, making life just a little bit better around the edges but not stemming the flow of discriminatory experiences that create some lives as more privileged than others.

### ***2.8.2 Indigenous people and land issues: driving people to paradise with a stick***

Another peculiar problem that is always faced by **most** indigenous minorities has to do with issues of land; they are characterised by landless poverty, perpetuated by a sedentarisation model of development. As explained by Humpage (2005), for the indigenous people development often involves confiscation of their grazing lands and forced sedentarisation. It is very common for most governments to resettle the indigenous minorities and justify that it is in the interest of their development even in cases where they contest their movement. For example, when justifying forced development, former Vice President Ali of Sudan opined that his government would 'drive the people to paradise with a stick if necessary; for their own good and for the good of those who will come' (Alexander, 2013). This seems to be a common development model among governments, even in relation to the San in Botswana. Unfortunately, Duncan (2008) has noted that development projects that often require resettlement of local communities rarely take into consideration the rights and culture of ethnic minorities.

According to Wachira (2008, p.24) 'Indigenous people's rights over land and natural resources flow not only from possession, but also from their articulated ideas of communal stewardship over land and a deeply felt spiritual and emotional nexus with the earth and its fruits'. This suggests that there is a difference in the way some indigenous people consider land. For most non-indigenous people, land is a commodity to be bought and sold or simply 'home',

while for many indigenous people it has spiritual connections and is their livelihood (Kidd, 2008). Therefore, land seizing for the indigenous people means loss of livelihood and spiritual life. Unfortunately, when governments intend to implement relocation, these 'meanings' attached to land occupation are rarely considered.

The literature witnesses that it is a common occurrence for the land of ethnic minorities to be seized by government for large scale development projects. In Cambodia, the government has given more than 2.7 million hectares to private companies for commercial development. Much of the land was taken from indigenous minorities in the north eastern province (Duncan, 2008). A further example in Australia in 2010 saw the New South Wales government approve the sale of land known to have been a burial ground for the Aboriginal people to the retailing giant Woolworths despite contestation by the Aborigines. The Namibian Himba group also are at loggerheads with their government over the proposed construction of Epupa hydroelectric power dam which is going to be built on the Himba land (Wachira, 2008). So it is with the San whose ancestral Central Kalahari Game Reserve has been taken away from them in the name of development. Although the San still remain on their traditional land, they have lost all rights to land as the mainstream groups were more successful in obtaining legally recognised ownership, a concept unknown in San culture (Nthomang, 2002).

Those who are unsympathetic towards indigenous people on land rights issues question the sympathy shown by others in safeguarding the indigenous people's rights to land. Malkki (1992, p.29) questions the indigenous cultural rights to land by asking if they are 'rooted' in their native soil somehow. Malkki further asks whether the rights of the indigenous people are somehow more sacred than those of other exploited and oppressed people. It is arguments such as this that appear to underplay the core issues involved in the land struggle by the indigenous people. As explained by Wachira (2008), land to the indigenous people is not only a home, but is their livelihood. This suggests that if their land is taken away they may find it difficult to have access to the natural resources they have been relying on for their daily livelihood.



### ***2.8.3 Indigenous people and education***

Education, whether formal or non-formal is believed to be a very important factor of development (Simon, 2003). As emphasised by McGivney and Murray (1991), the concept of development cannot be understood without linking it to education. As such, one of the ways to 'develop' the indigenous people is believed to be through education. Hence, governments are encouraged to improve access to education for the indigenous people through international conventions and declarations, such as the United Nations Declaration on Education for All, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, the 1960 UN Convention Against Discrimination in Education and the World Declaration on Education for All in 1990 (in Jomtien, Thailand). However, there seems to be discrepancy in relation to the inclusion of the indigenous people in the education system. As much as education is perceived to be a cornerstone of economic growth and social development and a principal means of improving the welfare of individuals, as Tilak (2002) claims, for most indigenous people, including the San, education is yet to improve their circumstances as alleged. Hence, the assumption that education leads to development is challenged. In fact, scholars such as Hartfelt (1988) are of the opinion that education and training do not create development opportunities for anybody except teachers. It is thus very important to establish if education practically addresses everyone's development needs, specifically those of the indigenous people who are known for their low participation rates.

Many challenges have been attributed to the low participation of indigenous people in the formal education system. The challenges range from lack of mother tongue education to the general culture of the school (Kincheloe, 1999; Nhlekisana, 2009). For colonised countries, it appears that most governments are still clinging to the legacy left behind by the colonial powers in the education system, thus complicating ethnic or multicultural issues in the school curriculum. Most governments following the attainment of independence did not incorporate the aspirations and needs of the indigenous minority groups within the school curriculum (le Roux, 1999; Nthomang, 2002). Instead, the interests of the colonial power alongside those of the dominant groups were pursued through the school curriculum. Notably, this was carried out through the language of

instruction in schools and the culture nurtured by schools. Brock-Utne (2001, p.118), when referring to the power of the language of instruction in schools, argues that education is not a neutral enterprise but a platform where power can be manifested; the choice of a language of instruction is a political choice, a choice that may redistribute power in a global context as well as within, between the elites and the masses. The argument on the neutrality of education provides a platform from which to understand the manner in which education can be helpful or create obstacles to socio-economic development, particularly with regards to indigenous San communities.

It is interesting to note that, even where the challenges are responded to, the challenge of low participation still lingers on, which suggests that perhaps the problem is much deeper. According to the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (2001), despite great efforts to make the San people participate in formal education in Namibia, only 30% are attending school as compared to 90% of non-indigenous people. Similar cases of low participation have been reported among the San in Botswana (see Nhlekisana, 2009; Wagner, 2006). The low participation of indigenous people in education has also been evidenced in western countries. For example, Else (1997) explained that Maori students as a group spend less time in the education system, and do less in it, than non-Maori students. In support, a study by Maani (2000) showed that more than 60% of Maori males and females in 1996 had no school qualifications. The study examined the link between educational attainment and income level for the Maori and the non-Maori. The study further examined the contribution of educational attainment to relative Maori income levels. The study revealed that the Maori population was at a disadvantage in terms of educational attainment, employment and income levels. It is clear that they are low paid because they cannot be employed in white-collar jobs or other well-paying jobs, as they need higher qualifications.

Many studies attribute the failure of the indigenous people to access education to the social structure that consciously or unconsciously keeps them away from school through discrimination. The Episcopal commission on indigenous peoples (2007) has identified two ways in which this discrimination is experienced. One way is from people and the education system itself. Students from non-

indigenous groups and teachers in the school usually discriminate against indigenous people and the education system itself upholds ideas of the mainstream which discriminates against the indigenous students. According to (Hampton, 1995 , p.35) this reflects 'cultural genocide' because education seeks to brainwash the native child by substituting native knowledge, values and identity. Perhaps this is fuelled by a social structure that is based on the values of the mainstream groups while downplaying those values that govern the indigenous communities. This scenario reflects power imbalances that can possibly privilege some groups over others. As explained by Common and Frost (1988), when students are evaluated with instruments developed and based on mainstream ideas, the student is faced with the prospect of being evaluated not on the basis of his or her capabilities but on the extent to which he or she has acculturated. Similarly, May and Aikman (2003) argue that schooling has been explicitly and implicitly a site of rejection of indigenous knowledge and language, a means of assimilating and integrating indigenous people at the cost of their indigenous identity. However, a pertinent issue that arises alongside culture is that it is dynamic; the indigenous people are relating to and existing within other cultures, so how and to what extent indigenous culture should be woven into the process of education remains unclear in the literature. It can be problematic to present indigenous cultures as static and unaffected by change, when change is even affecting other cultures.

Another dimension of discrimination relates to other aspects of school such as the requirement for a uniform and shoes which are beyond the financial capacity of many indigenous communities. This form of discrimination is indeed interesting to follow in considering the context of the San in Botswana, since they are provided with uniforms and shoes and other things needed for school under the RADP. It is thus imperative to understand the role of these provisions on education for the San and other indigenous people.

## **2.9 Summary of the literature and derivation of the research questions**

The literature demonstrates that much research has been conducted in relation to indigenous people all over the world, including locally on the San.

Nonetheless, despite all these studies it is clear that tensions remain on how development should be implemented and interpreted when dealing with indigenous people. In some instances, it is argued that 'othering', or specific policies and programmes aimed solely at indigenous people, will make their development initiatives effective because their issues, such as poverty and marginalisation, will not fight for attention alongside the issues of non-indigenous people (Simon, 2005). It is argued that 'separate' development for indigenous people will address their plight, since treating them as equals with non-indigenous people does not bring equal results in their development (Saugestad, 2002).

On the other hand, it is argued that 'othering' indigenous people in development discourse will perpetuate their marginalisation even further. Referring to San in South Africa, Robins (2001) argues that the San's 'exceptionalism' and 'first people status' could end up isolating and alienating them from development interventions meant to improve their situation. According to Robins, 'ethnic separatist' strategies will confine the San to an 'ethnic cage' which erects an artificial barrier from other people. Although Robins goes further in claiming that 'othering' the San in development fails to recognise the potential for their participation in broad class based development initiatives, he fails to demonstrate whether, if they were treated just like any other group, they would become equal players in the development discourse. It would also appear that, despite considerable evidence, development aspirations and needs differ; Robins still believes that the San people's history of impoverishment and marginalisation would be ignored. Further on, Robins' views seem to take for granted the existing power relations inherent in the development process. Thus, 'othering' indigenous people is not without foundation; rather, 'othering' them is one way of making sure that their concerns and aspirations are not overlooked. According to Sylvain (2002) 'the distinction between indigenous people and marginalised minorities is important here because it effectively separates indigenous peoples' issues from class issues' (p.1082).

When referring to the Inuit in Canada, Langdon (2009, p.5), as quoted by Moquin (2010), claims that 'othering' indigenous people it's an understanding that positions Indigenous communities as if they exist in some isolated context

without any cross-fertilisation of ideas from other cultures and vice versa. In contrast however it should be noted that when an account idealises the past, it does not deny the hybridity of culture, or indicate a return to the past, but acknowledges that history and the past can be tapped into to chart the way forward; the fact that indigenous people's culture is not pure does not mean that we cannot trace some of the problems they face in development to their past. Either way, whether indigenous people are 'othered' or not, tensions or weaknesses in models of their socio-economic development are of the utmost importance to this study.

It has so far been observed that different policy ideologies continue to add ambiguity and blandness to the development discourse. Development policy ideologies ranging from multiculturalism to integration and assimilation and self-determination persist in discussions on development and indigenous people, but it appears that almost all the policy ideologies continue to demonstrate a weakness in addressing the core issues in the development of indigenous people.

The literature shows that it is common in Africa to deal with indigenous people through integrative and assimilative policies, as it is common in Europe to deal with them through multiculturalism and self-determination policies. Despite the various policy ideologies, development for indigenous people still remains a challenge. A study by Suzman (2001) also attests to the fact that assimilative and integrative policies for the San in Namibia have failed. According to Suzman (2001), many of the less successful San projects have floundered because their management structures have not been sufficiently flexible or participatory to accommodate the different outlook of the San. This has proved to be the case in some initiatives where little or no cultural sensitivity has been demonstrated.

As assimilation and integration have failed, multiculturalism policies adopted in most first world countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand continue to present more weaknesses than strengths in the development of indigenous people. It has been argued that multiculturalism policies, like integration policies, have failed to practically improve the unequal power relations in development practice and as such indigenous people continue to suffer marginalisation, poverty and other social ills (Dwyer, 1996, p.4). Perhaps these

(integration and multiculturalism) policy ideologies can be looked at as two sides of the same coin as their weaknesses are closely related. In fact, Givens (2007) sees these ideologies as vague and confusing and argues that integration is a vague yet technical sounding term that encompasses a range of positions from more assimilatory policies through to more openly multicultural ones.

Multiculturalism policies have been condemned because they distract attention from the plight of indigenous people in the development discourse and the reason they are impoverished in the first place. Several studies (Curthoys, 2002; Kymlicka, 2002; Donald & Rattansi, 1992) concerning indigenous people have indicated that there is a problematic positioning of indigeneity in multiculturalism policies which results in the omission of the plight of indigenous people. Curthoys (2002) argued that the Australian Aboriginals' inclusion within the multiculturalism policy denies them their specifically different situation and experiences as indigenous Australians, their position as the original inhabitants, their history of dispossession and continued connection to land. Arguing for the indigenous people in Canada, Morrissey and Mitchell (1994) equally opine that tensions surrounding indigenous people and multiculturalism stem from complications involved in situating Aboriginal identities within a policy of cultural pluralism, which displaces indigeneity by reducing it to the status of 'just another ethnic group'. Similarly, it also seems controversial as to how cultural and ethnic identities are preserved within integrative policies such as the RADP.

A local study by Molebatsi (2002) concluded that the integrative nature of the RADP offers limited opportunities for San development because the programme does not take on board local variations and problems faced by marginalised communities. Molebatsi (2002) was studying the impact of the change of RADP focus from ethnic orientation to remoteness of the San. In this particular study however San were not studied as indigenous people, but as an exploited and marginalised group within Botswana society. Approaching the San in the same way as any other exploited group has its own limitations. Firstly, as has been proved elsewhere with other indigenous people (Curthoys, 2002; Morrissey & Mitchell, 1994), if the San are studied as if they are just another exploited group, important issues that have caused their current exploitation may be

omitted, for instance the history of their exploitation. Secondly, the fact that their lifestyle and culture is tangential to other marginalised ethnic groups could be overlooked. Studying the San as indigenous does not mean that the account ignores the fact that there has been change in their lifestyles and as such their culture is not as purely indigenous as Moquin (2010) claims. Rather, it is an attempt to acknowledge the impact of history.

Another study was undertaken by the Ministry of Local Government (2010) to review the impact of the RADP on the livelihoods of remote area dwellers. The study did not specifically review the impact of the RADP on the San, instead lumping together remote area dwellers. Studying the impact on the remote area dwellers does not necessarily consider the peculiar problems which arise from the indigeneity of the San and any recommendations made from that study might overlook specific felt needs of the San. Simon (2005) contends that lumping indigenous people and poor people into the same category diverts attention from the special development needs of indigenous people and the way they became impoverished in the first place. It is thus important to learn and understand from their perspective what is missing, what formula they think can work for their development and what would constitute ideal development to them. Although some studies (Moquin, 2010) argue that binary differences are false, their argument is cosmetic in the sense that they want to overlook the fact that it is a social reality; whether or not we can claim that being indigenous should be looked at as normal does not erase the fact that their difference stems from their indigeneity. The current study within this thesis is comparative and seeks to understand existing issues when San exist with non-San on a daily basis and when San are the majority population of a settlement. It is hoped that much can be learnt from a situation like this in as far as development understanding and practice is concerned. Although Nthomang (2002) studied the development understanding and aspirations of the San, the study only focused on the Kanaku settlement which is heavily concentrated with San; thus, this does not enlighten us on issues concerning a daily existence alongside non-San groups.

Another related study by Nthomang (2002) examined the San's aspirations and experiences of development. The study used the internal colonialism framework to analyse the San's development. One weakness of the internal colonialism

framework is that it neglects the fact that contemporary colonialism might be changing every day, potentially requiring new explanations; in other words, yesterday's colonisation cannot be like colonisation today (Robles, 2002). Although internal colonialism theory helps us understand inequalities in development that have been brought about by histories of colonisation, unlike critical social theory it chiefly explains social order rather than critiquing it and providing tools for emancipation. The 'coloniser' and 'colonised' binary within the internal colonialism framework contributes a persistent reassertion of an artificial divide between tradition and modernity. Thus, locating aspects of culture becomes difficult as culture is not static and 'uncontaminated'. According to Robins (2001), advocates of modernisation and traditionalism seem to share a common discomfort with the idea of 'the hybrid'; they seem to believe in the necessity for pure categories and identities, the same thing that internal colonialism assumes.

Although many studies on indigenous people argue that their development is failing as a result of cultural conflict, it has not been clear how their culture can be preserved or left intact in the face of change. A study on the Inuit by Moquin (2010) indicates that, although the Inuit claim to want to practice their own culture, this does not necessarily mean going back to the past as it was actually lived. They need to hold on to their culture, perhaps not in an absolutely authentic 'traditional' sense, but in a reconstructed and contemporarily adapted manner. It is thus important to establish from the San which aspects of their culture they wish to preserve and how their culture should be integrated into the development discourse.

The literature (Nthomang, 2002; Saugestad, 2002) continues to argue that indigenous people should choose the kind of development that will best suit them, on their terms and conditions. Although it is only fair for indigenous people to engage in development by choice, it is not yet clear from the literature how they can be equal competitors in the capitalist world, which encourages competition for resources. This brings forth the question of who is responsible for determining development: the people, government or the circumstances prevailing.



Although the RADP has no exit mechanism strategy in place, existing studies on the San and the RADP have mostly overlooked the extent to which the programme promotes self-reliance of the beneficiaries. Being silent about any exit from the programme might send a message that the beneficiaries are not expected to leave the programme and hence they remain dependent on the programme. It is thus important to try to find out how the programme intends to empower its beneficiaries to be self-reliant and depend on themselves.

The literature well documented poverty and under development problems faced by indigenous people and specifically the San (le Roux, 1999a; Nthomang, 2002). However, even though a lot is known about San poverty and development struggles, little seems to be known about what the San understand as development and poverty. Additionally, although power (relational-domination) seems to be a critical aspect in the development processes, the identity of the San as the subordinate in the relations of power, has not been well documented. Therefore, based on these gaps identified in the literature review, the three research questions for this study were drawn (see 1.6).

## **2.10 Theoretical framework: Critical social theory and participatory development theory**

### **2.10.1      *Introduction***

When researchers undertake a study to investigate a particular issue, they devise a theoretical framework that will guide the logic of the study. The proposed theoretical framework should be suitable to and compatible with addressing the purpose of the study and the intended research questions. Moreover, a suitable theoretical framework has explanatory power, being able to clearly explain the phenomena being investigated. According to Maxwell (2013), a high level useful theory provides a framework to explain what is observed. Particular pieces of data which might otherwise seem unconnected or irrelevant to one another or to the research questions can be related by fitting them into theory.

The main purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of the San with regard to their socio-economic development through the RADP. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the theoretical framework that informed this study's philosophical foundations and arguments. According to Simon (2011), a good theoretical framework ensures that the investigation being carried out is not solely based on the researcher's instincts, or guesses, but rather on established theory and empirical facts obtained from credible studies. When describing what a theoretical framework is, Chinn and Kramer (1999, p.258) posit that a theory is a creative and rigorous structuring of ideas that project a tentative, purposeful, and systematic view of phenomenon. Thus, the theoretical framework of a research project relates to the philosophical basis upon which the research takes place and forms the link between the theoretical aspects and practical components of the investigation undertaken (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002).

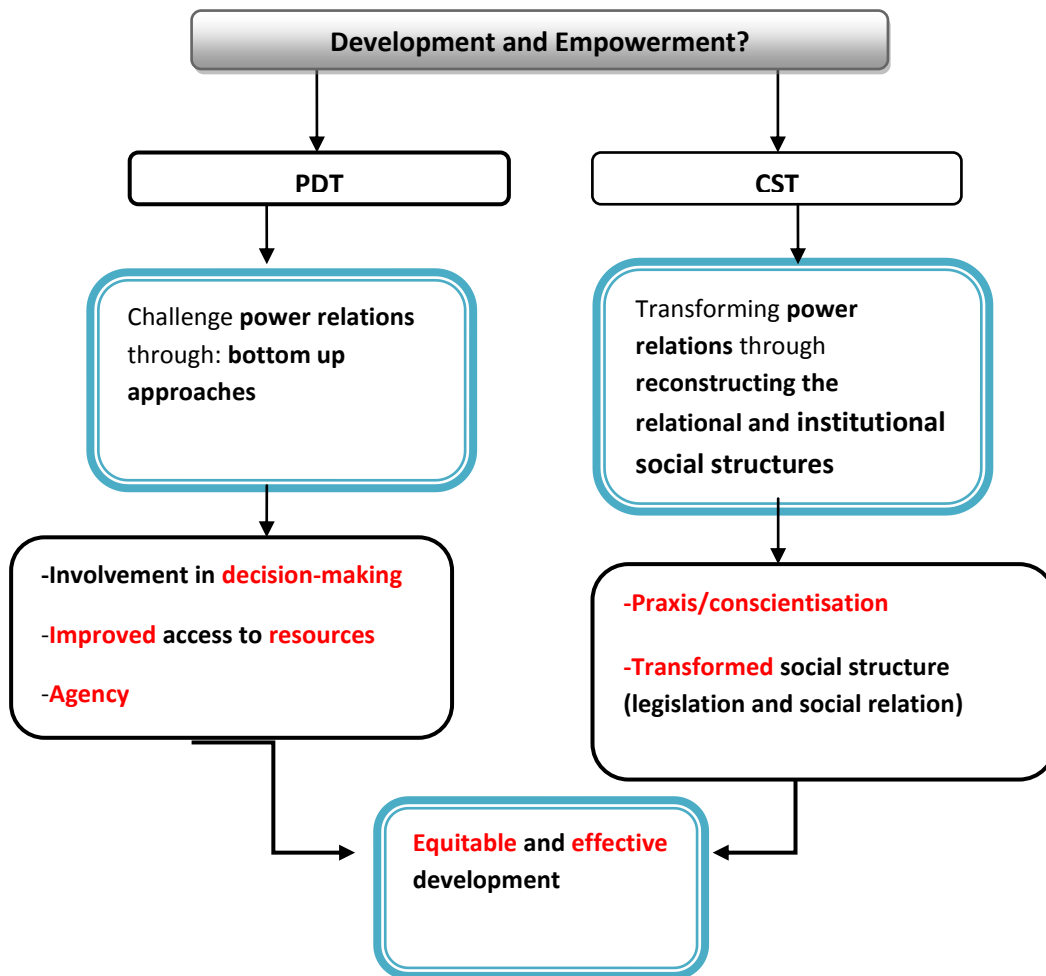
According to Simon (2011) the justification to choose a particular theoretical framework is in part influenced by the researcher's underlying assumptions of reality and the human world. It is the researcher's belief that central to human existence is interaction and this interaction influences reality in a particular society. Human interaction forms the fabric of society and determines what a human being can become; whether a human being becomes poor or rich, whether a human being can belong to the superior class or the inferior class and the resources that a human being can have access to. As a result, to understand how these configurations are decided, it is imperative to reflect on and learn about social structures that shape people's actions and experiences (Getty, 2009).

As this study intended to explore the San's experiences and perceptions of development through the RADP, it was considered appropriate to analyse their experiences and perceptions of development within a theoretical perspective that will explain how the San's subordinated position and other social relations combine to determine their development experiences and perceptions. This is based on exploring how the social phenomena are created, institutionalised, and made into reality by human beings to determine the experiences of the 'other'. Exploring the role of social structures in determining the San's experiences of

development is essential because the meanings that people identify with are determined by the social structures and communication patterns in which they participate (Getty, 2009). Based on this perspective, it is believed that exploring oppressive ideologies, myths that support and reproduce the status quo and distortions and false appearances that stand in the way of San development can be deciphered.

As theories are not an end in themselves, but instruments that can help us understand the world around us, it was considered appropriate to analyse the San's development experiences and perceptions through participatory development theory and critical social theory. When used together, the two theories may help in examining the empowerment framework envisioned within the development landscape of the powerless and oppressed. As indicated in chapter 1, development of the San is anchored on power inequalities based on the ascribed social status. Based on this, the San are usually excluded from development on equal terms (see Good, 2008; Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000). From the participatory development perspective, this means that they do not have a 'voice' (Chambers, 1997) to bargain for equitable development as their development will be built on domination and hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). Based on the critical social theory viewpoint, due to the persistence of domination and hegemonic structures, inequality may appear as 'natural' for those who are oppressed. In this manner, the oppressed will not find it necessary to challenge such oppressive structures (Freire, 1972). As described by Rowlands (1995) people who are systematically denied power internalise their oppression and consider it 'normal and natural'. Thus underlying the arguments of the two theories, development is a transformation process whereby beneficiaries try to liberate themselves from oppression and discrimination based on power relations that perpetuate unequal access to material and immaterial resources. As illustrated in Figure 2.1 below, the two theories locate 'underdevelopment' and poverty as consequences of unequal power relations. In this sense, poverty and underdevelopment are a matter of social (power) relations (Mosse, 2007) which their solution lies in changing the structures of power

Figure 2. 1: Empowerment based on PDT and CST



Although the two theories were thought to work together to provide a suitable analysis for San development, as indicated in Figure 7.2 and described in 7.1, tensions were realised in the analysis of the data.

### 2.10.2 *The rationale for participatory development theory*

The participation of intended beneficiaries is central to many development interventions. As explained by (Chambers, 1997; Cobbinah, 2011; Mwanzia & Strathdee, 2010) participation is a necessary condition for an empowering and sustainable development process. As such, basically empowerment forms the basis of the participatory development theory.

According to Chambers (1997), participatory development emerged as a paradigm shift in development thinking in the 1960s after it was realised that a top-down, professional-led development perspective was ineffective. This framework was popularised within the development practice as people-centred development or grassroots development (Penderis, 2012) which upholds a bottom up development approach rather than top-down approaches. Within this view, participation is believed to enable local communities to influence, implement and control activities which are essential to their development (Burkey, 1993). When dismissing the top-down, professional-led development, Parnwell (2008, p.113) argued that ‘central development decision-making, often involving city-based ‘experts’, is generally too detached from local contextual realities. It is frequently encumbered by a ‘planning arrogance’ where technocrats think they know best what is in the interest of the people at the grassroots level’.

Most literature on San development (le Roux, 1999a; Molebatsi, 2002; Nthomang, 2008) suggests that the San’s lives have not improved much. Despite the long existence of the RADP, the San remain powerless and dependent on the government. The San’s powerlessness in development has been evidenced by their lack of agency<sup>5</sup> to demand development on their own terms and bargain for resources equitably. Based on this, the participatory development theory was considered relevant because of the assumptions and arguments it advances concerning capacity building, self-reliance and empowerment. As purported by the proponents of participatory development, the lowers (Chambers, 1997) and the oppressed (Freire, 1972) should have a ‘voice’ in their development so that the process addresses their felt needs and priorities. These assumptions are useful in the current analysis because generally the RADP is set to provide an empowering development platform where the San’s capacities and capabilities will be strengthened for self-reliance. As such, participatory development theory offers a suitable platform to consider the factors that perpetuate capacity gaps

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<sup>5</sup> Agency in this instance refers to the ability to define one’s goals and act upon them, or a process by which choices are made and put into effect (Cobbinah, 2011; Hickey & Mohan, 2004).

which hinder the effective empowerment of the San communities through the RADP.

Additionally, Participatory development is directly intended to challenge power relations built on values and ideological norms (Hickey & Mohan, 2004). Considering the dominant and subordinate framework (Foucault, 1980) surrounding the San development landscape, the appropriation of the participatory discourse is relevant in explaining the influence of the power dynamics on the experiences and perceptions of the San towards the RADP development and development in general. As argued by Green (2000), participatory development can contribute towards more equitable outcomes in development as it is concerned with relations of power and offsetting factors that disadvantage the poor and lead further into poverty. The empowerment in this instance is considered to trigger power within, which is rooted in how people see themselves and their sense of self-worth (Ben-Meir, 2009). Drawing from these assertions, participatory development theory helps us understand the social knots that entangle the San's empowerment process.

Although participatory development theory offers a platform from which to understand the San's world of development, it has been criticised for a conceptual confusion. Penderis (2012) ascribed this confusion to the use of participation as a 'technical fix' for poverty and inequality problems. Further confirming the confusions surrounding participatory development theory, Green (2000) argues that participation is anything that reflect involvement of the local community which makes it far less straight forward. With regard to this 'laissez faire' conceptualisation, the underlying implication is that development projects have to define participation whatever way it finds suitable.

### **2.10.3      *The rationale for critical social theory***

For a long time, the San have been generally known to be poor and 'under developed' despite several efforts meant to improve their lives (see Good, 1999; le Roux, 1999a; Molebatsi, 2002; Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000). As a result, many studies explored the development landscape of the San in an effort to understand their consistent poverty. This was done from different lenses such as

internal colonialism perspective (Nthomang, 2002); social justice perspective (le Roux, 1999a; Nyathi, 2003) and the basic needs approach (Ministry of Local Government, 2010). However, although empowerment is the main basis for development and poverty, power has been infrequently the focus of attention for most of the past studies on San poverty and development. The significance of different dimensions of power has been downplayed. Power in this sense implies a relationship between groups and individuals (Mosse, 2007, p. 7). As implied by Mosse, power is a scarce resource which groups compete in a zero sum game. Based on this, the arguments of critical social theory are explored within this study to understand how the hegemonic structures and relations based on domination influence the San's experiences and perceptions of development.

Critical social theory is a meta-theoretical framework that includes a number of critical theories: critical pedagogy, post colonialism and an emerging indigenist critical theory (Getty, 2009, p.10). Critical social theory has its roots in the neo-Marxist ideology of the Institute of Social Research (the Frankfurt School) which has been influenced by the works of thinkers such as Max Horkheimer, Jurgen Habermas, Herbert Marcuse and Theodore Adorno. Generally, the birth of critical theory came as a result of the Frankfurt theorists' concern that all too often philosophers treat issues in the abstract, divorced from social context (Carr, 2000). According to the Frankfurt theorists, social theory was too cosmetic in the way it approached issues of society. As such there was a need to come up with a theory that would separate itself from both functionalist/objective and interpretive/practical sciences through a critical epistemology that rejects the self-evident nature of reality and acknowledges the various ways in which reality is distorted (Calhoun, 2010). Therefore, the goal of critical social theory is not just to determine what is wrong with society, but to identify progressive aspects and tendencies within it, to help transform society for the better. Major works that have greatly influenced the critical social theory as understood in this study include Foucault's work on power; Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and Gramsci's *Power and Hegemony*.

From the critical social theory perspective, the concept of development is located in a site of power struggle and those who are powerful benefit most from it at the expense of those with less power (Mosse, 2007). According to

Foucault (1980) the inequality in the development space is perpetuated by the 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' dichotomy. This dichotomy legitimises unequal power relations as it places the 'developed' in the privileged position of the creator and the giver of development while the 'underdeveloped' are positioned only as objects of development. The assumptions of power and social structure as anchored in critical social theory aid the understanding of how the San's subordinate and powerless status determine their sense of agency in development and access to both material and the various human and social resources which serve to enhance people's ability to exercise choices (Budiwiranto, 2007). Powerlessness in this context implies subjection to the domination of others (Mosse, 2007). As explained in chapter 1, In Botswana, different ethnic groups have different perceived statuses with some regarded as 'inferior' and others 'superior' (Nthomang, 2008). The San fall into the 'inferior' group. These categorisations have greatly influenced the social structure in Botswana and have determined each group's access to resources and decision-making power in the development process (see Cobbinah, 2011; Mosse, 2007). As expositioned by Cobbinah (2011) the extent to which an individual or community can influence a development process depends on the power the individual or the community possesses. This hence implies that since the San are inferior to every other group in Botswana and at the bottom of the 'inferior' ladder (Good, 2008) their development is founded on hegemonic structures (Gramsci, 1971) that uphold domination tactics. As observed by Solway (1994), ascribed and stigmatised ethnic identity was employed to exclude people from participating in valued activities, gaining access to resources and holding political office. To this end, the San today still do not have enough political power to challenge the discriminating social structure (Nthomang, 2008; Nyathi, 2003).

From the critical social theory perspective, the way the social structure is operating has implicitly maintained the *status quo* which perpetuates poverty and underdevelopment for the San. The social order is founded on systems of power, with some groups achieving hegemony on the basis of social, political, economic or ideological power (Campbell & Bunting, 1991). The dominant *Tswana* speaking groups are privileged by the social structure to define development reality (as part of their state power as policy implementers and



formulators and through social power) to the less powerful San. In this sense, the *Tswana* have the authority to make decisions. As explained by Budiwiranto (2007) this privileges the *Tswana* because the way in which resources are distributed depends on the ability to define priorities and enforce claims.

According to Jose and John (2000) the social structure has institutional and relational dimensions which determine how actors engage with each other. The relational dimension of the social structure therefore indicates the relations that exist between the San and the dominant *Tswana* speaking groups who have been privileged to be 'superior'. Institutional dimensions of the social structure relates to the institutions, (both formal and informal), involved in the practice of development. For example, economic structures, policies, laws, political structures and government systems. Having the dominant *Tswana* in the position of power implies that values and systems that guide society are situated and filtered through the lens of the dominant social grouping (Campbell & Bunting, 1991). In that regard, the values and beliefs of the dominant are sanctioned as policy positions which should be adhered to. As a result, those in positions of power consolidate their power and protect the interests of their group by working towards maintaining the *status quo* (Crewe & Harrison, 1998). Due to the internalisation of oppression, the oppressed willingly cooperate with those who oppress them in maintaining those social practices that result in their oppression (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010). According to Ledwith (2011, p. 144), oppression refers to the subordination, marginalisation and exclusion from society of the less powerful groups by the dominant, thereby denying them social justice.

The foundational conviction that underpins critical social theory is that no aspect of social phenomena can be understood without relating it to history and the structure in which it is found (Crewe & Harrison, 1998). As such, this thesis sought to interlock the San poverty and 'underdevelopment' in the historical context, and both the institutional and relational structures to explore the San's development experiences and perceptions. As discussed in 5.2.3 for example, San poverty is in part a result of structural deficiencies embedded within legislation founded on the ideologies of the powerful. As summarised in Figure 5.2, in serving the interests of the status quo, the ideas of the dominant

diminish life chances of the subordinates by creating poverty and reduced opportunities (Ledwith, 2011, p.143). According to Mompoti and Prinsen (2000), subordination of the San has intensified disempowerment and facilitated an elaborate evolution of patronage networks which, in addition to perpetuating and entrenching dominant *Tswana* hegemony, has simultaneously denied the San meaningful development. Through the lens of critical social theory, it is possible to analyse how competing interests between groups and individuals in society are resolved, identifying who loses and gains in specific situations. Based on this perspective, the distribution of and access to development resources not only depend on their availability, but on power also.

On the other hand however, although critical social theory implies that empowerment of individuals cannot take place without structural reorganisation (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010), how structural transformation can take place remains abstract. However, Leonardo (2004) defends this weakness by explaining that a critical approach does not seek to offer or impose solutions because part of the solution depends on how the problem is addressed in a particular context.

The next chapter that follows presents the methodology adopted in investigating the San's perceptions and experiences of development within the study's theoretical lens.

# Chapter 3

## Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents in detail the processes and procedures undertaken for the methodology of this study. It is divided into four parts. The first part is the research design which explains the planning of the study's general methodology and rationale for choosing a qualitative research approach. The second part is the data collection procedures where data collection methods are explained in detail. Thirdly, follows the data analysis procedures. This section mainly unfolds how chunks of collected data were turned into meaningful themes and categories. The last part is the summary where everything in this chapter is synthesised together.

### 3.2 Research design

#### *3.2.1 Ontology and epistemology of this study*

Ontology answers the question of the nature of reality or the social world. As purported by Waring (2012), ontological positions can be seen to exist in a continuum from realism to constructivism. However, choosing an appropriate design depends on the nature of the phenomenon being investigated and the belief about the reality that surrounds that phenomenon. According to realism, there is a single reality and objective accounts of reality can be given as they are subject to underlying unchanging universal laws (Punch, 2014). This school of thought is more aligned to the positivist epistemology. Epistemology answers the question of how can what is assumed to exist be known. According to Waring (2012), positivist (realist) epistemology sees it as possible to achieve direct knowledge of the world through direct observation or measurement of the phenomena investigated.

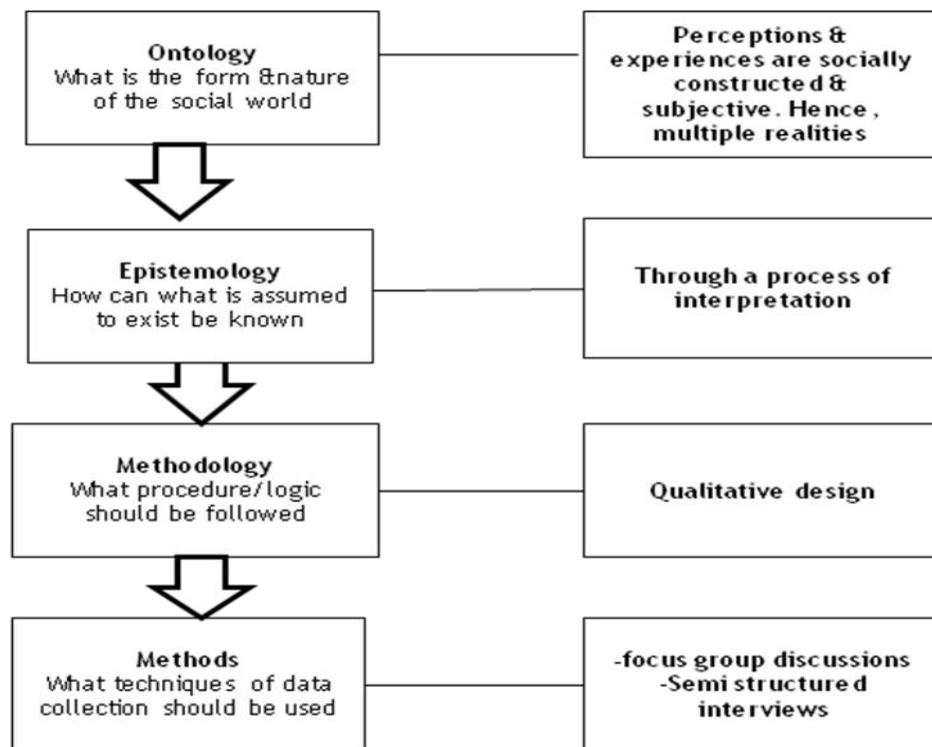
According to constructivism, reality is socially constructed and subjective and the researcher is there to make sense of bits of multiple realities by way of interpretation (Punch, 2014). Hence the subsequent epistemological position to constructivism is interpretivism. 'Interpretivism does not see direct knowledge as possible; it is the accounts and observations of the world that provide indirect indications of phenomena, and thus knowledge is developed through a process of interpretation' (Waring, 2012, p.16).

This study has been positioned within the constructivist school of thought in an effort to explore and investigate the San's perceptions and experiences of development through the RADP. It is believed that experiences and perceptions are subjective and socially constructed and, as such, they have no reality independent of the social context; in other words, they might vary between person to person or between the places of residence. For example, they may vary between Khwee and Sehunong.

Furthermore, while reflecting on the methodological assumptions tied to the ontological and epistemological positions of this study, it was decided that a qualitative research design would most suitable as it is likely to hold interpretivist views about the perceptions and experiences of the San in development. As such, due to the nature of the information being investigated by this study, quantitative design was found to be limited in that it mostly holds that reality is objective and power relations are not relevant in understanding the truth (Coe, 2012). The figure below illustrates the relationship between ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods for this study.

**Figure 3.1-The Relationship between ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods in the study**

Adapted from (Waring, 2012)



### **3.2.2 Qualitative research**

Social research can be qualitative, quantitative or mixed in method. These different research designs can be considered as the methodological philosophies guiding how phenomena being investigated can be understood. There is however contention concerning demarcation of research designs along these lines. Symonds and Gorard (2008) argue that use of the terms qualitative and quantitative as normative descriptors of research reinforces their binary positioning which effectively marginalises the methodological diversity within them. Hence, according to Gorard (2007), this division should never have occurred. However, mainly from issues that stem from epistemology and ontology, for some the divide between the three research paradigms serves the purpose indicated in the following paragraphs.

Quantitative research for instance is usually associated with positivism, the representation that according to Jonson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) is simply a

social representation based on a misunderstanding of how research is actually conducted. Within the positivist point of view, the task is to conceptualise and measure human behaviour in terms of key variables, and to discover causal relationships amongst these (Hammersley, 2012). Hence, the assumption about reality in this instance is that reality is objective and statistical measurements can be applied to acquire a scientific explanation of the phenomena (VanderStroep & Johnson, 2010). Measurement in this instance is believed to enable the researcher to transcend over human subjectivity.

On the other hand, the qualitative research approach is considered as more faithful to the social world as it allows data to emerge more freely from context (Gergen & Gergen, 2000). Some quantitative researchers dismiss qualitative research as lacking in rigour. This dismissal has been observed by Jonson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) who reported that there is a misconception among social scientists that statistical analysis is somehow a technical, essentially objective, process of decision-making, whereas other forms of data analysis are judgment based, subjective and far from technical.

The war of paradigms later introduced what is called a mixed method approach research paradigm, which is also clouded with controversy. The mixed methods paradigm is a kind of research that 'mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study' (Jonson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.17). The idea to combine these two pre-existing research methodologies was based on the fact that all methods have inherent biases and limitations, so the use of only one method to investigate a phenomenon will yield biased results. Thus, the main strength associated with mixed methods research is triangulation. Mixed methods has an 'edge' in being able to capitalise on the strengths of each paradigm whilst offsetting their weaknesses (Jonson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; VanderStroep & Johnson, 2010). However, scholars such as Symonds and Gorard (2008) and Hammersley (2004) are calling for the death of the approach already on the basis that endorsing mixed methods as a 'third category' means upholding paradigmatic separatism and thus creating a world of limitation in research. Symonds and Gorard (2008, p.17) rather suggest that 'we could use the word 'quantitative' to refer to only the activity of quantification, and 'qualitative' to

describe that which is examined in depth - without being linked to a research paradigm’.

However, despite the arguments and controversies advanced in the preceding paragraphs, this study has adopted the traditional paradigmatic approach based on the researcher’s abilities and understanding of social research. Hence, the qualitative research paradigm was considered the most suitable paradigm to adopt. As this study proposes to understand the world of development as experienced and perceived by the San, it was important to select a research paradigm that would help capture the experiences and perceptions of the San as they evolve within their natural environment, in detail.

Firstly, a qualitative research design was preferred because of its ability to demonstrate a variety of perspectives and experiences (Punch, 2014). This feature of qualitative research is desirable for this study as it helps in bringing meanings related to the concept of socio-economic development and issues of power to the fore, as it is accepted that there are multiple experiences of RADP development. As indicated by Sullivan, Monette, and Dejong (1998), personal meanings and feelings may not be adequately captured very well through quantitative methods, since they emphasise numbers.

Secondly, qualitative research design is well known for its ‘naturalistic inquiry because it takes place in settings where the experiences of the research participants occur’ (Chilisa & Preece, 2005, p.142). This aspect of qualitative research has helped in bringing to the surface opinions and experiences of the San about development in the natural setting.

### ***3.2.3 Multiple case study***

A multiple case study strategy was adopted to investigate how the San in Sehunong and Khwee experience and perceive their development within the context of the RADP. Multiple cases (i.e. both Khwee and Sehunong) were preferred so as to offer the study different perspectives of the same phenomenon and robustness which can offer replication logic. According to Yin (2003), through multiple-case study (even as few as two cases) the possibility of

direct replication is high. Yin continued to emphasise that the analytical conclusion drawn from each of the research cases is more powerful than those of a single-case study, because the findings have offered a somewhat contrasting context.

Studies of the San's experiences and perceptions of development in Sehunong and Khwee were conducted so as to provide different perspectives, as these areas are different in terms of population composition and geographical location. Hence, the multiple case study approach in this instance served to provide literal replication or theoretical replication. As Yin (1994) maintained, literal replication and theoretical replication either predicts similar or contradicting results. The findings of this study indicated a possibility of both literal replication and theoretical replication. For instance, there is evidence that there are similar perspectives and differing perspectives between the two cases, which can be used to understand their perceptions of development, power issues and the RADP (see chapters 4, 5, 6).

It should be noted that it was never the intention of this study to generalise the results, but to gain in-depth understanding of San experiences and perceptions of RADP development in Khwee and Sehunong. Consistent with Burns (2000, p.460) 'case study is used to gain in-depth understanding replete with meaning for the subject, focusing on the process rather than outcome, on discovery rather than confirmation'. Hence, this study strives to portray 'what it is like' to be a San RADP beneficiary in Khwee and Sehunong, as opposed to gathering statistical generalizations. As Eysenck (1976, p.9) advised, 'sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases - not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something!'. In fact, according to Sandelowski (1986), generalisation is something of an illusion because every research situation is made up of a particular researcher in a particular interaction with particular informants; thus each situation is unique and is less amenable to generalisation.



### **3.2.4 Sampling procedures**

This section focuses on the processes and procedures involved in implementing the research design.

#### **Study site setting and sampling method**

Sampling for the sites of study followed the procedures of purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, the researcher deliberately handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of relevance. This means that the selection is based on the belief that the units are helpful in achieving a detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes under study (Manson, 2002). For this study, the preferred research site was a remote area of San people who benefit from the RADP. Because of their population composition and geography, Khwee and Sehunong settlements were purposely preferred, as explained below.

The Khwee settlement is one of the San settlements in the *Boteti* sub district. It is located 69 km south west of Letlhakane village which is the main *Boteti* administration area. Except for cattle posts, Letlhakane is the only village neighbouring Khwee. As such, and due to the poor road network and lack of transport, interaction with people from outside Khwee is minimal. Khwee has a population of 1,196 people (Republic of Botswana, 2011). Mostly San people of *Zowutshwa* and *Xhibe* descent occupy Khwee, with only a very small number being non-San. It is acknowledged that, since the population census in Botswana does not collate population numbers by ethnicity, except for observation it is difficult to know exactly the number of non-San individuals.

Although Khwee has a primary school with a hostel, built under the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP) to accommodate the San children from within Khwee and the surrounding cattle posts, like most San settlements there are school age children who are still not in school. Also, the youth seem to be hit by unemployment and lack of education, as some drop out of school while some have failed. There is also a clinic which provides healthcare to the people of Khwee and a *Kgotla* which is used as an official gathering place. It has been

documented that the people of Khwee live in abject poverty as they have no sustainable economic activities (Morwe, 1998). As noted by (Morwe, 1998), most of the residents of Khwee are not employed and hence they rely heavily on government hand-outs and temporary employment in *Ipelegeng* (a government drought relief programme) which appears to be the main employer in the settlement.

Sehunong is a small settlement located 60 km west of Serowe which is the capital of the central district administration area. The population of Sehunong is approximately 1,049 (Republic of Botswana, 2011). The population make-up of Sehunong is different from that of Khwee in the sense that it is a mixture of both *Bakgalagadi* and the San (perhaps 50/50). The main San group found in Sehunong is of *Tshwa* decent (Cassidy, Good, Mazonde, & Rivers, 2001). Unlike Khwee, Sehunong is located in close proximity to other villages that are mainly populated by non-San people. For instance, Sehunong is situated next to *Moiyabana* and *Motshegaletau* and there is a good road network between these villages, such that interaction with people outside Sehunong takes place on a daily basis. Residents of Sehunong also rely heavily on government hand-outs since there are no employment opportunities in the settlement. They also rely on *Ipelegeng* for employment as labourers. Like Khwee, Sehunong has a primary school with RADP hostels but still there is a high dropout rate and the youth are not educated. These two study sites possess many similarities, although not in terms of geographical location or population.

The map below shows the location of Khwee and Sehunong settlements within the map of Botswana.

**Figure 2:2. Map of Botswana showing the location of Khwee and Sehunong**



### Participant sampling and recruitment criteria

While there is no prescribed sample size for qualitative studies, issues of practicality guided the sample size of this study. A total of 36 participants were selected for in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were categorised into three cohorts: RADP recipients, village leaders and government community development workers. The RADP recipients group consisted of 12 participants from each study site. The village leaders group consisted of councilors, chiefs and members of the Village Development Committee (VDC). There were eight participants in this group. The other group - government community development workers (GCDWs) - consisted of four participants who were mainly extension workers in education and social and community welfare. All of the members of this group are non-San. Among the village leaders' group, there are also members who are non-San (VLS 3, VLS 4).

For focus groups, participants were chosen from the beneficiaries group and the VDC. People chosen from these groups were later joined by eight people from a category named by this study as the Village Mobilising Group. This group consisted of leaders of other active groups in the village such as the Parents Teachers Association, Community Home Based Care and Out of School Youth Group. This group was necessary because, although they are not directly involved with the RADP, some of the RADP projects and other development mandates fall within their associations.

Participants of this study were selected through purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques. Purposive sampling, as explained by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000), is where the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of their typicality. According to Barbour (2001), this kind of sampling gives the researcher some control rather than being at the mercy of any selection bias inherent in pre-existing groups. In this regard, the researcher purposely selected non-beneficiary participants based on the experience and information they possess concerning the RADP and development of San in Khwee and Sehunong. For instance, village leaders (councilors, the chief and VDC members) and GCDWs were purposively selected because of their roles and positions in the community. GCDWs are the implementers of the RADP and the councilors are part of the policy making system, while the VDC should be overseeing community development in their specific jurisdictions.

San beneficiaries (who benefit from the RADP) were selected using a snowballing sampling method where the first respondent identified and recommended the next. May (1997, p.119) defines snowballing as ‘the approach in which the informants put the researcher in touch with the people they know have the wanted information’. This sampling method was preferred in this study because the researcher wanted to actively involve participants in the research process by at least helping in the selection of participants. The opportunity to be involved in decision-making processes, to be valued as experts, and to be given the chance to work collaboratively with researchers can be empowering for many participants (Goss & Leinbach, 1996). However, to avert a situation whereby the sample would only be made up of friends who might be holding similar views,

following the selection of every two participants the researcher went back to the chief or the community development officer to identify the next participant. The first contact person to recommend the first informant was the village chief by virtue of him being a village leader and the community development officer because he/she deals with beneficiaries on a daily basis.<sup>6</sup>

Below is a table showing the characteristics of participants who form the RADP beneficiary group.

**Figure 3.3: Characteristics of San beneficiary participants**

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<sup>6</sup> BNS is an acronym for beneficiary in Sehunong; BNK is an acronym for beneficiary in Khwee

Participant	Gender	Age range	Education level
BNK1	male	25-30	tertiary
BNK2	female	30-35	Junior secondary
BNK3	male	50-55	none
BNK4	male	50-55	none
BNK5	female	40-45	none
BNK6	male	30-35	BGCSE
BNK7	male	20-25	BGCSE
BNK8	male	20-25	BGCSE
BNK9	male	20-25	BGCSE
BNK10	female	40-45	none
BNK11	female	25-30	BGCSE
BNK12	female	30-35	Junior secondary
BNS1	female	45-50	none
BNS2	female	25-30	Junior secondary
BNS3	female	40-45	none
BNS4	male	25-30	tertiary
BNS5	male	50-55	none
BNS6	male	30-35	BGCSE
BNS7	female	45-50	none
BNS8	female	30-35	primary
BNS9	male	25-30	BGCSE
BNS10	female	30-35	primary
BNS11	male	30-35	primary
BNS12	female	30-35	Junior secondary

### 3.3 Data collection procedures

#### 3.3.1 *Piloting*

A pilot study was necessary to test the instruments' clarity and to check if they could gather the data sought. As such, before the actual data collection could commence, a pilot study was undertaken in the *Serinane* settlement. *Serinane* is located between Molepolole and Letlhakeng villages and is populated by people of San origin. According to Turner (2010), a pilot test can involve any

participants who have similar interests and characteristics as those who are expected to take part in the main study. As with Khwee and Sehunong, Serinane is an RADP settlement that holds similar characteristics to those found in the two study sites. Serinane was selected for the pilot study because of its proximity to Gaborone (the capital city), where the researcher was residing. Hence, it was cost effective, but also had the relevant characteristics.

The pilot participants included four San RADP beneficiaries, a community development officer and a member of the Village Development Committee. These people had similar characteristics to those whom the main study sought to involve. All of these people were interviewed individually using the interview guide designed for the main study.

The pilot showed that some questions were unclear, as regular clarification of particular items was sought. The researcher eventually developed probing questions so as to clarify these questions. Also, it was clear that although the researcher specifically wanted to talk about development in the context of the RADP, at times people talked about totally different development efforts such as the president's *Build a House and Blanket* Campaigns. In this instance, the researcher also prepared probing questions which led to discussion of the RADP. After gathering the pilot data, the researcher improved the instruments accordingly.

### **3.3.2 Before the start of the actual data collection**

It should be pointed out that community development officers (GCDW) in the settlements are civil servants and have to be authorised by their seniors to participate in any kind of research relating to their office. As such, before proceeding to the research sites, the researcher needed to seek authorisation from the respective council secretaries in Letlhakane (for Khwee) and Serowe (for Sehunong). Upon obtaining authorisation, the researcher visited the first site, Khwee.

For both research sites, the researcher made telephone arrangements with the community development worker (GCDW), who informed the chief about the visit

and the research, such that by the time the researcher arrived the chief had been briefed and it was just a matter of establishing rapport. In both sites, the first place visited was the *Kgotla*, where the chief spends most of his day. In a traditional *Tswana* setup, it is important to start with the village chief as he is one of the gatekeepers who can encourage residents to support the research. Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2011, p.92) defined gatekeepers as ‘people who have a prominent and recognised role in the local community; they typically have knowledge about the characteristics of community members and are sufficiently influential to encourage community members to participate in a study’. Further, according to Burgess (1984, p.48), gatekeepers are ‘those individuals in a research setting that have the power to grant or withhold research’. In the case of the current study, chiefs in remote areas oversee the villages and possess the power to make any decisions involving the community. Although written permission had been obtained from the council secretaries, the researcher had to seek the chief’s blessings so that he would encourage his subjects to participate freely.

Since Khwee and Sehunong are small settlements, the residents know each other and it is always easy to tell when there is a visitor in the village. The moment they saw the researcher’s car at the *Kgotla*, people came around thinking that the researcher was somebody looking for people to employ; they are always hopeful that one day a visitor will bring them employment, as this is what they need most (as shown in the findings). As the residents gathered, the researcher was introduced by the chief and the GCDW. As the researcher started establishing rapport with potential participants, she informed them about the nature of her study and the fact that participation is voluntary. The first interviewee was selected by the chief and the process continued as described above (the snowball sampling). It should be noted that for participants who could not read and write, verbal consent (which is seen as culturally appropriate and acceptable in these communities) was enough (Nthomang, 2002). Data collection took seven months.



### **3.3.3 Data collection methods**

This study used in-depth, one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions to collect data. Data was collected in Setswana and later translated into English for easy analysis. It should be noted that, although the participants had their local languages, they were comfortable using Setswana which is the national language. The researcher started with the semi structured interviews and later conducted the focus group discussions.

#### **One-on-one semi structured interviews**

In-depth interviews are well known for promoting dialogue at a personal level between the researcher and the participant. Dialogue in this instance is important because the researcher is able to probe respondents beyond the accounts provided, to develop clarity. As Mouton (1996, p.41) cautions, ‘even with well-constructed surveys, it is impossible to know whether the respondent understands a certain word or value laden phrase in the same way the researcher does. Qualitative research with its interview style allows researchers to investigate meanings’. Furthermore, Patton (2002) explained that ‘the purpose of interviewing is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective’ and understand issues from their lived experience.

In order to understand the San’s development experiences through the RADP, selected individuals were asked open-ended questions by the researcher face to face. Each interview took between 40 and 90 minutes. An interview guide was used to guide the interview. An interview guide is useful in helping the researcher to be systematic while being flexible at the same time. Patton (2002) advised that an interview guide serves as a basic checklist during the interview to make sure that all relevant topics are covered. Interviews were conducted in different places as the participants had to choose a location they were comfortable with; some participants preferred the *Kgotla* while others preferred their homes.

## **Focus group discussions**

As this study sought to explore the experiences and perceptions of the San on development and the RADP, the focus group fitted well because of its explorative nature. The focus group discussion groups in each study site consisted of a mixture of participants who were previously selected from the individual interviews and those from the community mobilisation group (a group which only participated in the focus groups). Those focus group members who participated in the semi structured interviews were purposely selected by the researcher based on the interesting views they put forward in the individual interviews and their ability to contribute meaningfully to the discussion. They are not shy in expressing themselves which increases the chances of such individuals actively participating in a group forum.

Focus group discussions allow for interaction between participants which is believed to elicit more of the participants' points of view than would be the case with more researcher-dominated interviewing techniques. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), focus group interviewing assumes that an individual's attitude and beliefs do not form in a vacuum; people often need to listen to the opinions and understandings of others in order to form their own - as interaction among the group develops, ideas will be stimulated as members react to and comment upon others' views. According to Stage and Manning (2003), this dynamic creates a great opportunity for the researcher to view the participants' commitment to their views.

For the current study, a moderator was engaged and trained on what to do during the focus group discussions. Having a moderator was necessary in order to diminish any possibility of domination within the group. The moderator was guiding the discussion so that it was not derailed or chaotic. To kick-start the focus group discussions, participants were asked the general question 'What does development mean to you?'. The discussions were tape recorded and lasted roughly two hours. Each focus group was mainly made of beneficiaries, members of the VDC, the PTA chair, community home based care and members of the Out of School Youth Group. The focus groups had between eight and ten members.

Fortunately, in none of the focus groups did there appear to be any introverts and everyone was able to participate.

### **Rationale for using focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews**

It has been argued that the use of different methods in concert compensates for their individual limitations and exploits their respective benefits (Shenton, 2004). This study has, hence, used both focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews to benefit from the strengths of both methods and try to diminish their individual weaknesses as practically as possible. Different data collection techniques were employed to complement and check on data and thereby reduce the possibility of unsubstantiated findings. According to various researchers (Gergen & Gergen, 2000; Krefting, 1990; Patton, 2002), exclusive reliance on one method may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality being investigated. It was hoped that semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions would help in counteracting the threats to credibility identified in each of the methods. For instance, individual interviews only give individual views and perceptions, but focus groups can provide a collective view of the community by eliciting information that paints a portrait of combined local perspectives, which are important for this study.

Although both methods permit dialogue, this can occur at different levels. For instance, with the individual interviews the dialogue is between the researcher and the interviewee while in focus groups the dialogue is within a group, which can act as a stimulant for different thoughts. It is hoped that the use of two data collection methods will reduce the errors seen when interviewees respond with what they think is the preferred social response; in other words the data would be based on social desirability rather than on personal experience (Krefting, 1990).

### **Limitations of the data collection methods used**

It is important at this stage to outline the limitations of the data collection methods used in this study. As indicated by Nthomang (2002), it is important to look at these limitations as they can inhibit the credibility, reliability or validity

of the findings. Perhaps at this point it is important to understand what is meant by validity, credibility and reliability in this study.

According to Razzaq (2012, p.104) the reliability of a research instrument is judged by the extent to which the same results can be repeated if re-administered. As argued by Krefting (1990), positivists use the concept of reliability; they seek to replicate the results as they believe in single a reality. According to Golafshani (2003), a concept that closely correspond with reliability is dependability. As the current study is qualitative, with the intention not of reproducibility of the results but rather of producing illuminating and consistent results, dependability is a more suitable term to use. Dependability in this study was achieved by data triangulation. Overlapping data collection methods (semi structured interviews and focus group discussions) were used to enhance the study's consistency. However, it should be noted that dependability (reliability) in qualitative studies may be compromised because the interview schedule is less tightly structured than a questionnaire (Bush, 2007). This weakness has been justified by Bush (2007) as he argues that, instead of restricting participants by the artificiality of a standard instrument for the sake of reliability, trustworthiness can be increased by letting people express their feelings and thoughts freely. As a result, qualitative studies such as the current one emphasise the uniqueness of human experiences so that variation in experience rather than identical repetition is sought (Krefting, 1990).

Another way to increase dependability is to check the meanings of certain words with language experts during transcription and translation. For instance, where the researcher was unsure of the English equivalence/meaning of particular words, she asked colleagues in the University of Botswana language department or any other person who was deemed competent.

Another important concept at this stage was validity. Construct validity has to do with testing whether the instrument measures and describes what it claims to measure and describe. In qualitative research, this is an element of establishing trustworthiness. Two methods were used to check whether the instruments measured what they were meant to measure: the pilot study and member checks. Before the fully fledged data collection started, the researcher engaged

in a pilot study where people with similar characteristics to the intended participants were interviewed using the same questions meant for the main study (see details at 3.2.1). For member checks, the researcher would summarise what she thought the participants were saying and go back to them to confirm if what had been recorded was indeed what participants had intended to say. Also, the instrument was given to other researchers (PhD students and university lecturers) to help check whether the questions were asking what the researcher wanted to find out.

### ***Focus group discussions***

Although the weaknesses of focus group discussions were minimised for this study, it is important to note their associated challenges. As argued by Stake (2005), as qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world, their manners must be good. Bearing this in mind, focus group discussions can be time consuming and require group effort; hence, if some members do not turn up, there is little that the researcher can do but encourage them to attend, as they are only volunteering to participate. In fact, according to Mears (2012) this challenge can only be overcome by patience and fitting oneself into the busy calendars of the participants.

Also, focus groups can be time consuming in that at times, if the discussion is derailed, the researcher cannot immediately tell people that they are out of topic as this might limit them and prevent them from speaking freely. This challenge has been confirmed by Gibbs (2012, p.189) who pointed out that the actual discussion taking place in a focus group may differ somewhat from the schedule suggested because in a group the interaction levels can change the flow of the topic and the researcher inevitably has less control, even if they are highly skilled in group research.

Focus group discussions are well known for their ethical dilemmas concerning issues to do with confidentiality. As indicated by Gibbs (2012, p.189), it is not possible to ensure confidentiality because all participants hear the discussion in a group even if they do not share it beyond the group. In as much as this study was not seeking sensitive personal information, it is acknowledged that it might

be difficult to tell if the discussion was free (i.e. people being free to voice their real perceptions) or if they were providing answers that were found to be socially appropriate at that time. To minimise the effect of this challenge, this study combined focus groups with semi structured interviews. Following the recommendation of Chilisa and Preece (2005), in order to minimise the challenges of using focus group discussions, focus groups should be used with other methods of data collection.

### ***Semi structured interviews***

Semi structured interviews are not without challenges, although the strengths do outweigh the challenges. Since most interviews were conducted in the open, in most instances there were a lot of distractions that had to be dealt with. For instance, since some community members were thrilled to see a new person in their village they would come to hear what the researcher was discussing, thus disturbing the interviews.

Semi structured interviews are time consuming in terms of translation and transcription. The lack of rules, the vast amounts of data to process and the tasks of writing are baffling (Lichtman, 2006). For this study, the interviews took between 40 and 60 minutes and transcription took much longer; as the interviews were carried out in Setswana, translation was necessary. Also, since most interviews were conducted outside, the recordings were unclear and it took a great deal of time to understand what was being said.

### ***3.3.4 Ethical considerations***

Ethical considerations are very important for every work of research as they ensure that the research process is trustworthy and the participants are not jeopardised in any way (Hesse-Biber & Lina, 2011). This study's proposal and instruments were submitted to the College of Social Sciences, University of Glasgow for an ethical review process and approval. Later on, at the start of the data collection, the proposal and instruments were subjected to another ethical review process by an ethics committee in the Department of Community Development and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural

Development in Botswana. This review process was a requirement of the researcher's research permit. Also, this study adhered to the expected ethical standards explained below.

### **Anonymity and confidentiality**

Anonymity and confidentiality exist to protect the identities of the informants and keep the information they give confidential. According to Wiles, Crow, Heath, and Charles (2008 ), the concept of confidentiality is closely connected with anonymity in that anonymity is one way in which confidentiality is operationalised. Anonymisation protects participants from identification and consequent harm. The essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity. In this study, participants were assured that whatever they discussed with the researcher would be confidential; even in the final write-up of the thesis their information would be anonymised. As such, to increase confidentiality, the recorded interviews had no names attached to them. Instead, a diary was kept with numbers so that participants could be tracked if a follow-up was required.

The researcher tried by all means to respect the privacy of the respondents and conceal their identity at all stages of the study. Their names and positions are not used in the findings. Instead, general labels are used so as to increase the levels of confidentiality and anonymity. However, it is acknowledged that some information can be too individual and the identity of the informant can be known, for instance if reporting what an area councilor or community development officer said, since there is only one officer per settlement. In this case, the researcher has tried to present the data in such a way that is general rather than related to one person; for instance, all extension workers were lumped together into one category called government community development workers (GCDW). As such, all the GCDW were given the number prefix code, GCDW1. Councilors belonged to the village leader's category and was also coded amongst other village leaders such as the VDC, the chief as VL1, VL2 etc. In this manner, the statements of people such as the chief in Khwee/Sehunong were avoided and instead a 'village leader' code was preferred. These are the codes adopted in the findings chapters (4, 5 & 6).

Anonymity and confidentiality were also emphasised in the focus group discussions. Participants were not required to mention their names and during report writing the focus groups were coded according to the respective settlements, for example focus group Khwee (FGK) and focus group Sehunong (FGS).

### **Use of a recording tape**

A recording tape was used in this study to capture the interviews verbatim. This allowed the researcher to focus during the interview sessions (without having to worry about recalling what the interviewee said later on). The consent of participants of the use of a recording tape was solicited and no participants had any problem with being recorded. As such, they all completed a consent form which was explained to them verbally and in writing. For those who could not read and write, everything was verbally explained and they were asked if they understood.

### **Ethical dilemma**

The San is one of the most researched groups in Botswana and this has been blamed for research fatigue in the San communities (Lebotse, 2009). Interest in the San is not only among local researchers, but also among international researchers and tourists, who sometimes give them compensation. As such, it appears, some possible participants in this study believe that all researchers are funded by big organisations with a lot of money and that they should benefit from that for participating. In this regard, some of the participants wanted payment before they would participate in the studies which created an ethical dilemma for the researcher. This behaviour of participants has in part been blamed on research fatigue.

According to Clark (2008) research fatigue can be said to occur when individuals and groups become tired of engaging with research and it can be identified by a demonstration of reluctance towards continuing engagement. It has been argued that some groups, more especially peculiar groups such as the San, have been exposed to various works of research that do not seem to change their situation;



thus, they have lost interest in participating in something that does not help them in any way (Lebotse, 2009).

The dilemma then was whether participants should be attracted by giving each of them a small amount of money. Doing this seemed to have a poor moral standing because it would be as though participants were being bought. In fact, the issue of compensation to participants from marginalised backgrounds is a controversial issue. According to Slomka, McCurdy, Ratliff, Timpson, and Williams (2007), ethical concerns about paying individuals to participate in research is concerned with undue inducement, as the provision of incentives sometimes can undermine potential participants' ability to act in their own best interests. For this study, instead of paying participants for their participation, they were offered tea/drinks and biscuits during interviews as a token of appreciation. Although it was not what some of the participants wanted, the data collection went well.

### **3.4 Data Management and transcription**

Data management has been defined as the recording, storage and retrieval of data collected from the field (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data management in this study was important so as to avoid any possibility of misquoting and mis-linking data. Although interviews were tape recorded, a diary was also used during the interviews to note any interesting information that the researcher wished later to refer to or follow up on. Also, the diary was used to keep any information related to interviews such as age, gender and education level. Each interview was allocated a page for recording the biographical data of interviewees which made it easy to mark the interview against its biographical data. The tape recorder and the diary were always safely kept with the researcher so that they could not be accessed by a third party.

The data was also managed through the online software package, Nvivo. This software is one of the currently popular computer assisted qualitative data management and analysis programmes. Transcripts were downloaded into the software and the biographic details included so that data would not be misquoted or mis-linked.

## **Transcription process**

The transcription process for this study was a two-phased process in that the researcher was transcribing and translating transcripts from Setswana to English. Data was transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Verbatim transcript is essential in analysis as it captures information in the participants' own words, phrases and expressions, allowing the researcher to uncover cultural meanings (Hennink et al., 2011). The researcher transcribed the data by carefully listening to the taped interviews. It should be mentioned however that at times it was difficult to hear exactly what was being said. In these instances, the researcher asked someone to help decipher what was being said.

The transcription was carried out solely by the researcher and no research assistant was hired to do this. This helped, as a preliminary analysis of data started when the researcher was listening to the interviews while transcribing. For instance, the researcher had a feel for what direction the data was taking by noticing the common phrases being used by respondents during transcribing. The transcription process took about a month to complete.

### ***3.4.2 Reflexivity***

As mentioned above, qualitative research is sometimes critiqued for its limited objectivity when compared to quantitative research design which is believed to be more robust and objective (Zainal, 2007). As a result, a qualitative researcher has to continuously reflect on any personal beliefs and characteristics which could bias the results of the data. Bias for researchers usually emanates from their values and ideology towards life in general. According to Griffiths (1998, p.133), having a bias as a researcher is an inevitable position, but the real problem is failing to acknowledge them in the research process. This process is known as reflexivity. According to Marcus and Fischer (1986), reflexivity is a process by which the investigator seeks to understand how his or her personal feelings and experiences may influence the study and then strives to integrate this understanding into the study. Nthomang (2002) cautioned that when a researcher is unable to be reflexive, potential biases in the research are glossed over and hidden.

Reflexivity in this study was useful as it helped ensure that the over-involvement of the researcher was not a threat to the credibility of the study (Chilisa & Preece, 2005). As a member of the dominant *Tswana* group, the researcher had biases that posed a threat to the study's credibility. Of importance among these biases, the researcher has always believed that the Government of Botswana is doing all that can be done to help the San, but they do not take the opportunities at their disposal. The researcher acknowledges however that the bias altered while undertaking data collection. As the San explained their development stories during data collection, the researcher was able to realise that the blame is not only on the San; their development failure is a complex issue that cannot be blamed on them alone. Understanding their own stories, struggles and aspirations helped the researcher to balance bias and negative feelings towards the San. A diary for biases was kept by the researcher and constantly referred to. This diary helped greatly as the researcher could return to the questions she had asked to see whether they were in fact self-fulfilling or balanced. Also, member checks helped because the researcher could go back to the participants to confirm whether what was recorded was what they wanted to say.

During the analysis, the researcher regularly reflected on her biases and repeated the analysis to bring about several possible interpretations of the data. This was done by continuously going back to the raw data.

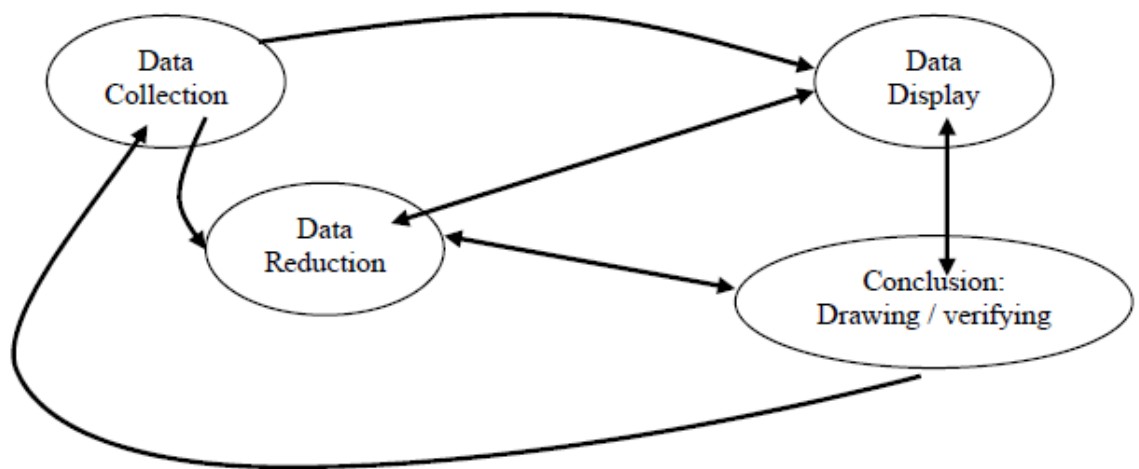
### **3.5 Data analysis procedures**

The data analysis for this study followed the grounded theory procedures of data analysis. According to Thornberg (2012, p.85-86), the grounded theory approach to data analysis allows the researcher to scrutinise and interact with the data to understand what the data says rather than applying preconceived categories or codes. Thornberg reports further that this helps to explore, analyse and generate concepts about individuals and collective actions and social processes.

Although preliminary analysis for qualitative studies concurrently runs with the data collection, Burns and Grove (1999) state that there is the analysis stage whereby the researcher goes in-depth into the data analysis. As proposed by the

grounded theory analysis approach, the data analysis process for this study did not follow a linear process; it was interactive and cyclical, as it was ongoing even as data collection and transcription continued. According to Patton (2003), ideas for making sense of the data that emerge while still in the field constitute the beginning of data analysis. Below is an illustration of an interactive and cyclical analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

**Figure 3.4: Interactive and cyclical analysis**



Data analysis for this study was mostly guided by an inductive analysis approach. Inductive data analysis involves discovering patterns, themes and categories that exist within the data collected and formulating conclusions. The primary purpose of the inductive approach is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data (Thomas, 2003; Thornberg, 2012). As recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006), coding and theme creation in this study followed six phases: familiarisation with data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining, refining and naming themes.

The initial familiarisation with data started when the researcher was collecting data and when transcribing. At these stages, the researcher could see the shape the data was taking. To further make sense of the data collected, an initial coding stage followed. According to Cobin and Strauss (2008), a code should be seen as a summarising phrase for a piece of text which expresses the meaning of

the fragment. This stage is commenced by reading and analysing the data word by word and line by line. As explained by Thornberg (2012), this stage is facilitated by the use of the constant comparative method to compare data with data, data with code and code with code to find similarities and differences.

For this study, data was downloaded into the Nvivo software one transcript at a time. Each transcript was read line by line to identify the main concerns, words and phrases that seemed to be capturing the phenomenon of the study, which were the San's experiences and perceptions about development. These concerns, words and phrases were used to create preliminary nodes and sub-nodes (codes) as they emerged from the data. Later on, the promising nodes and sub-nodes were further examined and systematically re-coded as the researcher explored further which nodes best captured what the data was suggesting. At this stage, possible relationships between nodes and sub-nodes were identified to tell an analytical story of the experiences and perceptions of the San about development in the RADP context. This process ended with three main themes which form the three main findings chapters. The chapters are as follows: Chapter 4 - Perspectives on the RADP development, Chapter 5 - Experiences and perceptions of poverty in the RADP development and 6 - Identity, power and participation in San development.

Although Nvivo, as with other computer based data analysis systems, is classified as being quicker than manual data analysis, it was in fact a time-consuming process in this instance as the researcher had to learn the technical aspects of the software. It is however acknowledged that the software was advantageous when it came to advanced analysis as it readily established relationships and patterns at a click. For instance, it was easy to see how people with a particular education level and gender mostly responded to a particular issue.

As the methodology chapter described how the data was collected, the next chapters, 4, 5 and 6, presents the findings from the data collected.

# Chapter 4

## Perspectives on RADP development

What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have become less severe, then beyond doubt there has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, and especially if all the three have, it would be strange to call the results 'development', even if per capita income soared (Seers, 1972 cited in Makuwira, 2003)

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses research question number one which is concerned with understanding how the San respondents in this study conceptualise development. It begins by briefly locating the relevant findings for the question within the literature and current development debates. Thereafter, the respondents' perspective of development in the context of the RADP is presented in two sections. The first concerns the respondents' conceptualisation of development including descriptions and indicators. Also included in this section are the issues of minority versus indigeneity. The second section provides a detailed account of this group of San's perceived reasons for slow and less development together with explanations given by participants on why they have not reached the 'expected' development state. The perceived reasons for slow and less development have been further categorised into structural reasons and attitudinal reasons. Then, at the end of the chapter, the findings are summarised in the context of the relevant literature.

As the findings of this chapter show, the situation of the San in this study in relation to socio-economic development is no different from the picture painted in the development literature. The findings of this chapter indicate that there is no common understanding of the concept of development although development is a common concept among the participants. This scenario is also evidenced in the literature; the concept of development is well documented but it has been indicated that it is a highly contested concept (see Escobar, 1995; Sachs, 2005;

Sen, 1999). According to Sachs (2010), within the definition of development lies semantic confusion. As such, development can mean just about anything from constructing skyscrapers to fitting latrines, from drilling for oil to drilling for water.

Evidence from the findings in this chapter and the literature on development for indigenous people further reveal that they have been made to believe that development is everything that is not in their culture (Saugestad, 2001; Young, 1995). Using a critical social theory lens, this is an example of how development is a process that thrives on domination as the dominant groups ensure that their worldview overrule the others. There is an abundance of evidence demonstrating that RADP construct of development negates non-*Tswana* norms (Saugestad, 1998; Nthomang, 2002; Molebatsi, 2002) and disqualifies San norms as less developed or undeveloped. The findings presented here indicate that, to a larger extent, the group of San in this study have internalised this view and thus consider their traditional norms and values as impediments of development. As illuminated by a critical social theory lens, this demonstrates how reality for subordinate groups is not constructed by them, but with the perspective of the dominant (Getty, 2009).

## **4.2 Conceptualisations of development: ‘Seeing through the eyes of the master’**

All the participants explained that they understood the main mission of the RADP as bringing development to remote communities. Development in this context has been understood in two different ways. First, in terms of behavioural and attitudinal change and second, with a focus on material and physical structures. All the conceptualisations of development in this study seemed to be guided by what is found within areas occupied by the dominant *Tswana* speaking groups, such as the *Bangwato* (one of the dominant *Tswana* speaking groups). As such, the findings suggest that participants mostly conceive development as a process of achieving what the dominant groups have achieved or as becoming like the dominant groups. As a result, in their understanding of development most San participants seem to strive for conformity, as shown in section 4.2.1. Several expressions that were used to express development included sedentarisation and

assimilation, empowerment, government support, independence, material accumulation, infrastructure and service provision and adoption of new behaviours, which are explained further below.

#### ***4.2.1 Development as sedentarisation and assimilation: ‘come and be like the Bangwato’***

Even though the RADP reports that its primary role is to bring development through integration of remote area dwellers into the larger society, some participants in this study understood the main objective of the RADP as simply assimilation into the mainstream *Tswana* society. The findings revealed that among the RADP San recipients, understanding development as assimilation was popular among the older generation (45-55 years) of the participants in both Khwee and Sehunong. Those with this persuasion reiterated that the purpose of the RADP is to relocate them from the bush to settlements, to turn them into *Bangwato*. The *Bangwato* is one of the dominant eight tribes found in Botswana and they are socially and politically powerful in the central district where Khwee and Sehunong are located. Mostly the San people work for the *Bangwato* as cattle headers and labourers.

When explaining what it means to be a *Mongwato* (an individual belonging to the *Bangwato* group), the participants noted that it means a change from the traditional San lifestyle to a modern lifestyle, which is practised by dominant groups such as the *Bangwato*. Below are some narratives demonstrating how the participants perceive the RADP, assimilation and sedentarisation. According to a beneficiary in Sehunong (BNS) and another recipient in Khwee (BNK):

The objective of the programme is to relocate us from the bush to live among the *Bangwato* so that we can also be *Bangwato*. Being a *Mongwato* means that we should eat modern stuff and stop eating wild fruits (BNS5).

.....But the government said, no leave the wild animals alone and stay in Khwee and eat bread and tea, eat everything and be like me (BNK3).



From the above narrations, it is evident that the *Bangwato* are not only seen as an ethnic group, but as powerful and forming part of the government; they are a dominant symbol for development. This perhaps uncovers the layers of unequal power relations consistent with development practice where the 'less developed' are supposed to look up to the 'developed' for their share of development. It appears that the San in this instance have come to accept development within the logic of the mainstream view, which disqualifies them as 'less developed' and, as such, as unequal players in the development process. Being unequal players in the development process automatically establishes an unequal power structure that can facilitate the interests of the powerful and dominant at the expense of those with less access to power.

The findings show that having less access to power has several implications for policy and governance. It is evident that in the established structure, those who sit on the less powerful side have less influence on policy, whether it favours them or not. This view has been reiterated by some policy implementers in this study when emphasising the assimilation of the San. For instance, government community development workers (GCDWs) in schools argue that it is important for the San to adopt the school values and practices (which are values of the dominant ethnic groups) because theirs are incompatible with school expectations. Below is how GCDWS1 and GCDWK1 discussed the issue of assimilation:

The values we instill in them are different from those instilled at home. We socialise them into the values of the school. I always see the difference in culture when we interact with them in school; it appears it's difficult for them to adjust. Let's say you teach the child that when you talk to elders you say 'yes sir/madam', when they go back home during school holidays, they adopt the culture at home and when they come back you have to start afresh. At home they are treated differently from how we treat them in school. (GCDWS1)

When we talk about educating a child, there are things that I can't let the child do in school, but those things might be cultural to them. We have our own expectation in the school. I know language can be

difficult for them but where will they get teachers who speak *Sesarwa*? (GCDWK1)

The findings further suggested that incompatibility is not only evident in schools, but even in everyday life. It appears some people felt that the values and practices that run the development practice rob them of their desired life and throw them into a state of helplessness and hopelessness, as indicated in the following excerpts:

Now I am always here because there is nothing I can do because really my life is in the bush. (BNK3)

Similarly, another beneficiary reiterated the fact that he does not have 'life' in the settlement:

Now we are not living well. In the past we were not harassed by hunger, we lived in the bush eating meat and wild fruits, having enough rain. But now, we don't have life. (BNK4)

Expressing how good life in the bush was, some beneficiaries compared themselves to their relatives who remained there when the government moved people to settlements:

In the bush there is life. As you see this hostel (the RADP school hostel), the parents to those kids are in the bush, they are fat. They are not thin like us who just persevere so that our kids can live with us when they go to school. (BNS1)

Although the findings suggest that the older participants seem to prefer their traditional 'less developed' life, the younger beneficiaries did not seem to think of the past traditional San life as desirable. They mostly saw it as a life that was difficult. One younger beneficiary in Khwee indicated that the San in the past were living a difficult life running around in the bush far away from services (BNK10). This means that, according to this beneficiary, life before sedentarisation was not easy and, hence, sedentarised life is found to be more

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<sup>7</sup> Sesarwa refers to the language spoken by the San

appealing because people have access to services and other things. Furthermore, another beneficiary explained that:

In the past, we were living a painful life that we were used to. But when we were moved from the bush, we were given a gift. (BNK12)

The pattern that is presented by the findings pertaining to life before and after the RADP above perhaps can be explained by different levels of exposure to either type of life. The differing perceptions according to age probably are influenced by the fact that most of the young San generation were born when the RADP was already instrumental in moving people from the farms/bush to the settlements. As such, they did not experience life fully in the bush and on the farms and hence it is easier for them to adapt to the settlement life than for their older counterparts.

#### ***4.2.2 The clash of development worldview: values of Individualism and collectivism***

The values of collectivism have long been upheld in traditional African society. This is evidenced by the *ubuntu*<sup>8</sup> philosophy or *botho* in Botswana. This philosophy is embedded in the beliefs of interdependence and cooperation. The findings suggest that for the San in this study, any form of development should insist on the good of all and the welfare of everyone. The way that the RADP food package is distributed and received by the San recipients illustrate this point. The RADP gives the food package to individuals who have been assessed and found to be unable to provide food for themselves for various reasons. The individual food package is meant to last for a month. However, the food package seldom lasts for a week as the recipients share their food with others who do not qualify for the package. According to the recipient below:

....the food ration is very small; it cannot even take up to three weeks. The thing is, if the ration is only for one person in the family, we all eat that and it finishes because the person can't eat on their own when other family members are just watching. (BNS6)

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<sup>8</sup> African philosophy that embraces collectivism as humanness

Similar sentiments were expressed by one government community development worker in Sehunong when he explained that:

There is a tendency that when we give them the monthly food package it only lasts two days. They (San recipients) will be giving this food even to their neighbors who are not getting the package. When you try to talk to them, they tell you that, those are their relatives and they can't just eat and be full when their relatives go hungry. (GCDWS2)

The emphasis on collectiveness/sharing values was reiterated further by some participants as they shared their experiences in the settlement. Some participants reported that life in the settlement is made even more difficult by individualistic behaviours that are maintained in the dominant *Tswana* society, as illustrated in the following excerpts:

Life in the farms is not like here where you sleep and wake up with hunger. In the Tswana culture they don't share, even when they cook in my presence they just eat without offering me food. (BNS1)

Life here is difficult. There is no sharing a plate of food with your neighbour and if you don't have food that's it. In the farms/bush there is a lot. You can't sleep on an empty stomach. (BNS11)

There is an indication from all the above quotations that there is incongruence in the values operating within the context of the RADP and the San participants of this study. For this group of San, the individual monthly food package can't be enjoyed by an individual, but must be shared with the community, even though the RADP expects the individual package to benefit only an individual. Perhaps this explains why the RADP San recipients in this study continue to complain of hunger despite the monthly food packages they receive through the RADP.

### **4.3 Development as infrastructure and service provision**

Associating development with physical infrastructure is not a new thing. Botswana as a third world country and other African countries have in part been considered less developed because of poor physical infrastructure such as roads,

schools, information technology and building structures. This view of development can be associated with the modernisation school of thought.

All the participants in this study mentioned that development means infrastructure and service provision by the government. They associated development with things such as good roads, electricity, schools, clinics, and water, transport and building structures. They explained that the availability of these things would make life easier as recipients would not have to travel far distances to seek services. As indicated by participant BNK12 and BNK11:

....these things make life easier for people, for instance, if we had a good road, we will be able to travel to other places, even other people will be able to come to Khwee to open businesses that will create employment for us. (BNK12)

The main thing in development is a good road. A good road will bring development that is found in other places. (BNK11)

Although development is commonly associated with infrastructure, sometimes infrastructure on its own does not fulfil development expectations. For instance, while most participants in Khwee believe that a tarred road can make a great deal of difference in the development of their village, it appears a similar tarred road has failed to fulfil development expectations in Sehunong where participants feel that it has made little difference in their lives. This sentiment was captured in a focus group in Sehunong (FGS) in the following excerpt:

Of course a tarred road is important for our development, but if there are no employment opportunities people continue to suffer in poverty. (FGS)

Sentiments about the state of the road and development in Khwee were shared by the village leaders. All the village leaders noted that development means infrastructure but in Khwee they have a bad road which delays development. According to VLK1:

The real problem is the road. Development is not satisfactory because the road is bad, if the road was tarred, it would be easier.

The emphasis on infrastructure seems to be seen as one way to improve service delivery which has been associated with development. The findings suggest that generally these San's notion of development is that it should follow people where they are, not for people to follow development in other places. A San RADP recipient in Sehunong pointed out that:

Development means services such as schools, hospitals, electricity, water and transport. But for us, these things are not there or when they are there they are not satisfactory. For instance, there is no electricity, no clinic we have to go to *Motshegaletau*<sup>9</sup> when we are sick. (BNS12)

The same sentiment was expressed by the following recipients of the RADP in Khwee concerning services in *Letlhakane* which is the sub-district administration centre:

If I say a village is developed, I will be looking at amenities in the village, when people do not have to go far to follow amenities such as offices, not having to go to Letlhakane always to get help. (BNK12)

....for me really there is nothing to glorify about the RADP. Things are not going well here just because we are far from services. (FGK)

Other services that were mentioned include water and electricity. Participants related that where there is development there should be water for human consumption. Participants from both settlements note that their water provision is not consistent as it comes from a water bowser which sometimes does not deliver water and they then go for days without water. They explained that this state of water shortage affects their development projects as sometimes their livestock has to go without water. In the Khwee focus group, it was stated that:

....you can be given the animals, and no water. That means the animals will die because you can't provide them with water. (FGK)

From all the above sentiments, participants can be seen to perceive development as something external: they explain that they are not 'provided'

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<sup>9</sup> A village next to Sehunong

with services or infrastructure in their settlements. They appear to believe that the government should provide them with everything for their development.

#### **4.4 Development as independence and self sufficiency**

Being able to provide for oneself without having to rely elsewhere for food and other things has been understood to indicate development. Almost all of the participants who are recipients of the RADP classified themselves as dependent and thus undeveloped or less developed. This was demonstrated in several ways. Recipient BNK12 explained that:

For an individual, I say someone is developed when they have a cattle post, modern houses and able to feed themselves and their family. Those are the people that I always look at and say they are developed because they are independent. (BNK12)

The other participant expressed independence in terms of food self-sufficiency as indicated below:

Development is about independence, not depending on government for everything. When you are developed, you just get into your house get your food and eat; you don't wait for food from government. I am not developed; I am still depending on the government for everything. (BNS10)

A village leader in Sehunong added that:

Development means improved lives, where people are able to do things for themselves, being able to provide for oneself, being able to feed your family. (VLK1)

Of the participants, 90% (n=22) pointed out that, like everyone else, San people wish for some form of independence and self-sufficiency, but in the current setup they are unable to provide for themselves and remain dependent on the government. Showing their eagerness for development in their own terms, the focus group in Khwee expressed that:

....we should understand that development is not only about giving people houses, it should also be about developing someone's view towards life so that they do things for themselves. Our wish is not to always rely on the government, as everybody else; we wish to see ourselves independent. (FGK)

The findings indicate that self-sufficiency and independence are seen by participants as in part facilitated by the surrounding environment. They believe that they should make use of whatever is available in their environment to meet their daily needs and become self-sufficient. As such, the environment is seen as a core asset in the struggle for survival, as indicated by the following excerpt from the focus group in Khwee:

We don't have to be dependent for the rest of our lives. The reason we seem to be relying on the government is that the government has closed up a lot of things that could be helpful to us. Initially, we knew that where you are you can use whatever is available in your environment to improve your life. For instance, you can get an antelope and sell and eat and develop. Many people are rich because of selling wild animal meat. Now the government has interrupted us saying it will do everything for us, now the government should keep its word and do as it promised. (FGK)

The participants also seem to imply that their self-sufficiency and independence has been robbed from them by overlooking the role of indigenous knowledge in the development of the San. As indicated in the following excerpt, people were able to use their indigenous knowledge to invest in their struggle for survival and achieve control of their own lives:

In the past I would just go into the bush and bring materials to build myself a house, now I am sleeping outside, I have to depend on the government even for a house because now we are far from the materials. The government has taken everything from diamonds to wild animals and I don't have anyone to look to. (BNK3)

The above sentiments probably tell us two things about the current San development. Firstly, the San's livelihood has been overlooked and ignored by the current development mechanism and the San feel helpless and imagine dependency to be their only strength for survival. Secondly, the San feel



incapacitated in their current circumstances as they are unable to use their environment and become self-sufficient. This suggests that they feel powerless and helpless to consider themselves developed.

## **4.5 Development as empowerment**

Development was also associated with empowerment. Empowerment in this instance was described in two ways: as employment creation and as skills training and education. The participants expressed that it is important that they are trained and given practical skills on how to take care of development projects they are given. They also noted that formal education is important in development as it will empower people to be able to function in the current society where education is needed for employment. Formal education, non-formal education and employment creation are separately presented in this section as ways of development as empowerment

### **4.5.1 Formal education**

Development and education are seen as reciprocal; education leads to development and development determines the conditions of education. As a result, formal education is seen as a solution to most of the problems associated with development such as poverty, unemployment and marginalisation. The Khwee focus group demonstrated that education can play an important role in the development and empowerment of minority ethnic groups:

Education is the best. You see the *Bakalaka*, they were despised long time ago, now because they are educated, they are powerful, and they are now human beings. So even for us, if our children could go to school and get educated, we will be human beings. Education gives respect. (FGK)

Another beneficiary reiterated that formal education can facilitate the San's development in that it improves one's social position in society:

Education can help us develop because when we are educated we can look for proper jobs. Also people who are educated are respected; you

can see that the *Bakalaka*<sup>10</sup> are respected because they are educated. (BNK12)

Parents also seem to be hopeful that if their children can persevere with education their situation will change, as it has for the *Bakalaka*. It is however interesting that, despite this group of San acknowledging the importance of education for their situation, their participation in formal education is still left wanting. Even during the field work, it was observed that many school age children are not in school while their parents speak of the importance of being educated. Several reasons have been given as causes of limited access to schooling by the San who participated in this study, including lack of parental support and guidance and corporal punishment in schools. One parent reported that:

My children are not in school because they say the teachers beat them when they are still in standard 1. But I also know that at school, you should be beaten so that you can perform better. (BNK2)

As indicated in the below excerpts, it appears some parents have given up their responsibility to encourage their children to go to school:

These kids were going to school, but as you see they dropped out. I really don't know why, only them will know. (BNK3)

There is lack of parental support and guidance. If the child drops out, the parents do not take them back to school, they just stay with them. (BNS11)

Parents' lack of support and encouragement for schooling has been in part blamed for the high dropout rates for the San children, as lack of formal education is seen to negatively affect the San's development prospects. As indicated by participant BNK1:

Government is trying to help by providing everything. I think the solution should start by educating parents because these students they run away and live with their parents who usually do not see

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<sup>10</sup> One of the minority ethnic tribes in Botswana

anything wrong with that-they just even allocate them household chores without hesitating. If the parents do not allow them at home, children will know that if I run away from school, my parents are not going to allow me to stay at home, so the children will know that they have nowhere to go. (BNK1)

#### **4.5.2 Non-formal education**

The other form of empowerment advanced for development is non-formal education. Non-formal education is said to be important for the development of the San in Khwee and Sehunong because those who are older can acquire education through non-formal means. The importance of non-formal education was explained in terms of literacy skills and practical training for development projects. As reflected by recipients BNK1 and BNS11 below:

When you talk about development you are talking about education, more especially the ability to read and write even if someone has not gone far with education. (BNK1)

....like it's always done in other places, if there can be non-formal education, which will teach people to read and write, even writing their names, it will be helpful for development. (BNS11)

The findings also revealed that practical skills are important as they enable people to function in the society as illustrated by the following quotes:

If you have skills you are developed. For us who have been poor, if we are given skills, we can develop because we can use the skills to help ourselves. This can help us move forward. (BNK)

We wish to see ourselves independent. But we can't do that because we don't have the skills and the light to do that. We need empowerment. (FGK)

To me development is about knowledge and skills that develop our thinking and show us how to live in the community. (BNS)

When they were probed on the type of skills they were referring to in this instance, participants explained that they needed practical skills on how to handle whatever development project they were given by the government, such

as cattle rearing and bakery. As suggested by the findings, practical skills for the San are necessary to facilitate their adaptation and aptitude in the current economy. For instance, even though they had been dealing with livestock, the livestock always belonged to the *Bangwato* and the San have not developed the skills and experience needed to be responsible for keeping their own animals. As illustrated by a villager leader in Sehunong (VLS):

....we really need encouragement, when we look after other people's cattle they will say if you don't take a good care of the animals I won't pay you and that makes us to do a good job. (VLS1)

#### **4.5.3 Employment creation**

Employment creation was considered very important for development as being employed is believed to facilitate independence and improved lives. As such, money is considered critical in the development process, as reflected by the following statements:

If you are not working how can you be developed? Nowadays, money is the one which makes people develop, but when you are not working and you don't have money how can you be developed? (BNS3)

If we are working, we will be able to develop ourselves. If you are working, you can borrow money from government and buy livestock, or build a house for yourself. (BNK 4)

Even though there is acknowledgement that people should do things for themselves without depending on the government (see 4.4), for various reasons participants expected the government to create employment opportunities. For instance, the government is expected to create employment opportunities as a reward. This view is illustrated in the excerpt that follows:

....but the government said, come and live in a village, we will bring you development when you are in a village. But we are saying the

government, even if you say we are *masarwa*<sup>11</sup>; give us employment so that we can see how we can help ourselves. (BNK4)

Participant BNS12 added that they cannot talk about possibilities of self-employment as they are unable to create any employment for themselves because they are poor.

According to the affirmative action framework for the remote area communities, one way to fast track the development of remote area dwellers is to give them priority in the few employment opportunities available in their areas. Commonly, the small number of available jobs that require semi-skilled workers in remote areas include kitchen cooks in primary schools, night-watchmen, generator operators, drivers and hostel assistants. There are in fact some RADP beneficiaries who have been helped to acquire the skills for such jobs so that they are well positioned when an opportunity arises. However, as indicated in the Khwee focus group (FGK), the affirmative action framework has not been well enforced:

Our youth can be sent to school through the RADP, some are taken to driving schools. But when there are employment opportunities, they (employers) don't look back and say we have trained people, they just employ different people. (FGK)

This was also observed pertaining to the generator operator position which was filled while the researcher was undertaking field work in one of the settlements. Somebody who was non-San and from outside the settlement was employed in a semi-skilled job which could have been fulfilled by one of the few Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) holders in the community. In my conversation with one of the GCDWs about the local positions, it was mentioned that they do not deal directly with employing people; this is dealt with by people at the district level. As some of the beneficiaries observed, the affirmative action process in this instance is not clear as the locals continue to be excluded from the locally available semi-skilled posts for which they are qualified. According to some recipients of the RADP:

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<sup>11</sup> Local name used to belittle the San

....referring to affirmative action, when employment opportunities arise and we apply, they don't even look at us. I wonder who should link us, is it the social worker, teachers, nurse, who? We are not really sure who should work out this affirmative action for us. (BNK7)

They always talk about affirmative action, but you will never see somebody from here benefitting from that. Even caretakers, they don't want to employ us for those positions. (BNS9)

The observations made by the recipients of the RADP in this study may be revealing of the fragmented policy action - the difference between what is written and what is happening on the ground. The affirmative action framework is a separate government document that is meant to support and enhance the objectives of the RADP in its effort to improve the lives of people in the remote areas. However, it seems not to be operating in tandem when it comes to the employment of local people in the San settlements.

## **4.6 Development as adoption of new behaviours**

In this study, development was also conceptualised in terms of modernisation whereby traditional values and practices are replaced with modern ones. In this regard, in order to be admitted into 'the developed' camp, one has to abandon traditional values and practices. For instance, one of the GCDWs in Khwee indicated that development is when people seek modern medical attention when they are sick as opposed to traditional medicine. The GCDWk1 expressed this because most San people when they are sick prefer traditional medicine over modern medical attention. Hence, from this viewpoint, GCDW1 suggested that the San should discard their traditional healing ways and adopt more modern practices if they are to be seen as developed. Furthermore, explaining development as behavioural change and modernisation, one of the RADP recipients explained that:

Development means when people change their lives from how they used to live, to a better life. For instance, we didn't know how to work for ourselves, we didn't know the importance of going to school, but now we do all these things. (BNK11)

It was noted also that, although the San in Khwee and Sehunong are not developed in terms of materials, it is hoped that their outlook on life and their attitude will show signs of development. According to one of the recipients:

Basarwa<sup>12</sup> are not yet developed. We hope they will develop, but not in terms of being rich, but in the mind-set. (BNK10)

In relation to the above, a village leader in Khwee even indicated that:

Initially people of Khwee were afraid of modern houses, but now they are used to them and they have even stopped making fire inside the modern houses, which shows that slowly development is taking place. (VLK1)

Development in terms of behaviour was also described as integrating with non-San. Some participants noted that initially they were afraid to integrate with other people and it delayed their development:

Basarwa everywhere you go you won't find them building homesteads among other people who are non-San, this shows that it is in the nature of this people not to mix with other people. If you take a San child to school, they will leave and come back home. (BNK1)

Also, it was explained that being able to relate to other people brings development because you get to share ideas, learn from other people and try to improve yourself. As stated by participant BNK1:

....generally, the reason why students who went up to form three and five have a bit of civilisation is because they have mingled with those students who are not San. They come with different cultures and ideas and as we befriend them, we get to learn a lot from them. (BNK1)

Another way to explain development in terms of behaviour has been associated with moulding behaviour. It is expressed that a developed individual and an individual who is not developed deal differently with everyday situations, as indicated in the following excerpts:

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<sup>12</sup> Local name for the San

Development is not only about materials, but attitude as well. For instance, when provoked, someone who is not developed will use violence but those developed will use a civilised way to solve the problem amicably. (BNK8)

In relation to the above, participant BNK10 added that:

Another kind of development is whereby you live well with other people, without bullying them. You are developed because you know how to treat others well. (BNK10)

From the two preceding quotations, it seems some participants see development as one of the variables needed for a peaceful society where people are treated with respect and are able to solve disagreements amicably.

## **4.7 Development as material accumulation**

One of the most popular conceptions of development is material accumulation and ownership. Irrespective of the study area, most beneficiaries interpreted accumulation or ownership of such things as livestock, boreholes, modern houses (cement brick house), kiosks, cars, food, clothing, farms, vegetable gardens and money as a pre-requisite for development. It appears however that money is seen as the most important element as it makes the ownership of and access to other assets possible. For instance, the ownership of livestock is seen as a bank from which money can be drawn whenever the need arises. This is indicated in the citations below from the focus groups:

Cattle is very important in development because if you keep them, you can always sell when you need money to do something, for example you can sell to be able to send your children to school. (FGS)

Development is about houses and livestock. If you are keeping livestock, you don't just eat them, you think about what you should do to multiply them so that you can improve your life by selling at times. (FGK)

As indicated below, some participants seem to believe that, with a conducive environment, livestock can help improve the lives of many San people as it is not



a strange enterprise but is something they have been dealing with for a long time as cattle headers for the dominant ethnic groups:

The development that can pull the Basarwa<sup>13</sup> out of poverty is livestock. The government can give them (San) livestock to rear. This can work perfectly because from long back, the Basarwa have been hired as cattle herders, so they know how to manage cattle. This is good because you will be building on what they know. (VLK3)

Livestock can be used to develop the Basarwa because we like livestock that is why we live in other people's cattle posts. (BNS12)

Housing was also mentioned among the important materials required for development. The participants who defined development in terms of housing stated that, if you do not have a cement and brick house (a modern house) but instead have a traditional house, you are not yet developed. This means that the traditional San house is seen as evidence of lack of development and backwardness, as indicated in the excerpts below:

....no I am not developed. I am still backward. I am not developed because you can see that I don't have a modern house. (BNS11)

....most of us in Khwee we are struggling; we can't feed ourselves because we are very poor that is why there are few cement houses. (BNK)

Another important aspect of development which was prominent in the data collected is food. Food is seen as a basic human need and its absence is associated with poverty and lack of development. In this study, food was cited as a very important variable of development as indicated in the Sehunong focus group:

....If there was development, government should be saying, as I am relocating Basarwa making them to leave their food behind, I will give them everything, now I am just here hungry, so it's not development. (FGS)

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<sup>13</sup> Plural for the San's local name

Participant BNK10 shared these sentiments about food and rhetorically questioned: I am not developed - how can I be developed when I don't even have food to eat?

#### **4.8 RADP entitlement issues: Minority versus indigeneity?**

The data collected in Sehunong paints a very interesting picture concerning issues of minority and indigeneity. The population combination of Sehunong is made of the San and the *Bakgalagadi*. The *Bakgalagadi* are one of the minority ethnic tribes with high poverty incidences. Instead of common poverty bringing the San and the *Bakgalagadi* together, it appears instead to bring tension as there is competition for development resources. The San appear to demand entitlement to the RADP on the basis of their indigeneity and perceiving the RADP as their exclusive right. As demonstrated in the following excerpt, the participant suggests entitlement to the RADP for provision of food:

....as I speak, they (remote area development officers) once de-registered me off the RADP monthly food package, they had to re-register me fast. They thought that because they gave me some cattle I am now counted among the rich. They re-registered me running because now I was dying with my children, hunger doing as it pleases with us and my children were now always constipated as they were only living on wild fruits as they did not have any option. (BNS1)

The *Bakgalagadi* on the other hand feel that they face the same socio-economic difficulties as the San and that they deserve RADP interventions equally because they are also poor. According to a *Mokgalagadi* village leader:

The *San* think that this (the RADP) programme is only meant for them. They always threaten that if they don't get any government help they will go back to the bush. But the government relocated them so that they can be like everyone else, to be independent, not depending on the government. We face the same problems as the San and for them it's even better because they are destitute who own cattle (referring to the cattle they received through the RADP). (VLS3)

Yet, it is clear the San feel the same about their entitlement and think that giving positions of village leadership to San people will ensure their entitlement. One of the San village leaders in Sehunong commented that:

It looks like if there is no control, *Bakgalagadi* will take over the RADP and sideline us. Electing a *Mosarwa* chief will help to put everything in check. Otherwise they will suppress us and take *our* things when we remain with nothing. (VLS1)

Still asserting entitlement, the same leader told a story about a *Mokgalagadi* who tricked them into enjoying ‘their’ (San) benefits and ended up being employed by the police services through the RADP affirmative action framework:

There is a *Mokgalagadi* who tricked us claiming to be a *Mosarwa* when he is actually a *Mokgalagadi*. As a result of him claiming to be a *Mosarwa*, he was employed by the Botswana police through affirmative action reserved for the San people. He is now enjoying our benefits as Basarwa when he is not one of us. (VLS1)

The findings further show that the village leadership, which is mainly San, have so far succeeded in sidelining the *Bakgalagadi* from the RADP interventions and this has led to despondency on the part of the *Bakgalagadi*, as revealed below:

....the RADP only covers the *Basarwa* and it excludes the *Bakgalagadi* even when they deserve RADP interventions. This issue is so serious that even the chief will say the RADP is there because of the *Basarwa* and they are the ones who should enjoy the RADP houses and other interventions. (VLS3)

## **4.9 Reasons for slow and less development**

As they discussed their conceptualisation of development, San participants narrated stories which explained the reasons, from their perspective, as to why the San are not developed despite the RADP. They can be categorised as attitudinal and structural. Attitudinal reasons have to do with the attitude of beneficiaries, the government and government workers while structural reasons are related to the structure of the environment in which the programme is operating.

#### **4.9.1 Attitudinal reasons**

Here, the attitudinal reasons concern embedded negative beliefs about people or circumstances and this section is divided into two parts to reflect the findings. The effects of a negative attitude in this context seem to be evident in the government community development workers who represent the government as policy implementers, as well as the recipients of the RADP. Thus, the first part concerns the attitude of the government and government workers (GCDWs) towards the development of the San. The second part relates to the attitudes of San in Khwee and Sehunong towards their development generally and in terms of the RADP.

##### **Attitude of government and workers**

In this study, two impediments concerning the attitude of some GCDW were identified by the San participants as preventing San's effective development. The first is the GCDWs derisive attitude which seems to be fuelled by the San's social position in the Botswana society. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that the community development workers were non-San and, as such, are socially superior to the San. This further means that they may see no urgency in meeting the development needs of the San as they are the lowest in the social hierarchy. Stories told about the GCDWs convey an attitude entrenched in marginalisation and subordination. As reflected in the statement below, officers are blamed for not doing enough for the San as they are prejudiced against those from different ethnic groups to theirs. Prejudice tends to be rooted in power:

RADP officers when they are working with people who are not San they do not despise the tribe; hence they put a lot of effort to help the beneficiaries. For the San, they know that if they don't help us properly, there is nowhere we can go to report, we are just stuck in Khwee far from everyone. (FGK)

Participants VLK3 and BNK6 respectively shared the same sentiments in commenting that:

....the problem is that the officers fail when it comes to implementation because *ke masarwa*<sup>14</sup> (we are San). You will realise that even the poverty eradication projects in other areas where they are not Basarwa have made progress. But for places inhabited by the San nothing is going on, take a look at Xere, Mmea and Kedia, they are just like Khwee because '*ke masarwa*'. (VLK3)

We are not developed because we are masarwa, everyone despises Masarwa don't they? You will realise that those places occupied by the Bangwato they all have good roads, but here we don't have one because *ke Masarwa*. We can go for days without water, but in other places they can't because they will die, but for us who cares if we die or live? (BNK6)

The excerpts seem to demonstrate, with the term *ke masarwa*, that the San understand development as an issue of power structure or class. Perhaps this hints at development depending not only on one's access to resources but also the power to command such resources for themselves.

The second identified attitudinal constraint has to do with the inefficiency of the GCDWs reportedly caused by the laziness of the community development workers in the settlements. This was captured in the following statements from focus groups:

Community development workers are good, but the thing is you can't know if they are lazy or what, when they are given work they don't do it. If they were doing their work, most of us would be having a better life. (FGS)

I think the problem is with the government extension workers who are delaying our things. Years and years pass by without getting help because they don't take our messages to the relevant authorities. (FGK)

Participants seem to stress the role of GCDW as being very important for their effective development and argue that there is little that can be achieved without their determined effort. In fact, the focus group in Khwee stressed that:

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<sup>14</sup> '*ke masarwa*' is a demeaning statement that shows San's despised social position. The prefix '*ma*' in the Setswana language denotes subhuman or servile origins (Thapelo, 1998)

Extension workers should continue to help us because, really they are our connection to the relevant authorities and it can be difficult to develop without their effort. As they are called ‘mma Basarwa’<sup>15</sup> they are our parents. (FGK)

Beneficiaries further emphasised the importance of government workers’ commitment to their development by stating that if extension workers do not fight for them, they are not able to benefit from the affirmative action which can help them gain local employment as kitchen hands, drivers etc. They explained that on their own they are unable to convince employers, but extension workers can speak on their behalf to those in high office. It appears that the participants believe that the success of their development efforts is not only down to them but depends on collective effort from everyone involved.

### **Attitude of some San people**

According to some participants, the San’s attitude can sometimes be blamed for their development failure. It has been reported that mostly San in Khwee and Sehunong do not want to work hard; they just want things to be offered on a silver plate and this breeds a dependency syndrome. This attitude is associated in the findings with several reasons which are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The San’s apathetic behaviour has been widely reported in this study by both San participants and non-San participants. On several occasions, the San in Khwee and Sehunong have been described as apathetic people who do not act when they are supposed to act and this behaviour makes them miss out on the opportunities made available to them, as explained below:

...mostly we are not developed because we are lazy. For instance, you can be given livestock and be lazy to look after them and that means the cattle won’t be of any use. (BNS7)

An excerpt from the focus group in Sehunong associated this apathetic behaviour with internalised subjugation whereby the San believe a better life is for others

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<sup>15</sup> Local name used for remote area development officers. It means ‘mother to the San’

and not their kind. As indicated in the following excerpt, it is suspected that they have may have become apathetic to their development because they do not believe it can change their lives:

*Basarwa* are not developed because they are apathetic when it comes to most things. Some of them for instance eat the animals meant to develop them and this delays their development. I think they always believe that a Mosarwa cannot live a better life. (FGS)

The loss of trust in development - and specifically the RADP in this case - is evidenced by statements such as this:

We were hopeful that RADP was going to help us develop. We should note that when it started it was known as the *Basarwa* development programme. But as I see it now, the programme is no longer helpful. I had wished to see a difference by now, looking back at the time Khwee was officially a settlement. Since then we have been meeting different community development workers, but there is nothing that we can look at that is positive, there is no achievement, except just giving out cattle and goats. The youth are still the same; they still can't better their education. Even if you could ask the previous community development workers what they have achieved, they can't point to anything. (FGK)

Some parents however seem to regret the apathetic attitude displayed by the youth specifically, because they believed the youth could possibly bring change to the San communities if they engaged in development efforts, as indicated below:

Development for the San- it's going to be difficult. Our children who the government has educated they don't care. When you try to show them life, they don't want to listen when you try to guide them; they only insult you. The problem is with our children; they should be the ones helping us develop. I see this among the Tswana; children are helping their parents. (BNS1)

Participant BNK5 further expressed the view that as parents they are helpless and hopeless about ever reaping the benefits from government development efforts as their children do not take education seriously:

San children don't take education seriously, they are just after playing and being ill mannered, that's the truth. Even when you try to reprimand them or ask them why they left school, they can just take a log, and hit you bad. Now we are also afraid of them, when they leave school you just say, he/she will just be poor as me as I am already poor. (BNK5)

The effect of the apathetic attitude which is blamed for the lack of progress on the part of the San is further demonstrated in the findings from Sehunong where San live amongst *Bakgalagadi*. In Sehunong, *Bakgalagadi* face similar problems of poverty and lack of development. However, it was discovered that although most of the *Bakgalagadi* do not benefit from the RADP, the few that do benefit make the utmost use of the programme interventions; this positively changed their lives when compared to their San counterparts. Several reasons were advanced for this mismatch in the results of the RADP.

One of the reasons is historical. As indicated by the community development worker below, the San have a different history to the *Bakgalagadi* in that *Bakgalagadi* has all along been sedentarised while the San were nomads and not used to collecting and accumulating property:

The San's RADP results are different because the *Bakgalagadi* did not grow up in the bush. They fully utilise opportunities they are given to help themselves from poverty. *Basarwa* they are comfortable with handouts and being poor because of the way they grew up as nomads. (GCDWS2)

This was reiterated by some village leaders who explained that:

The results are more positive on the *Bakgalagadi* than the *Basarwa*. The *Basarwa* they do not look after what they have been given, while the *Bakgalagadi* they are careful with what they have. If a *Mokgalagadi* is given cattle or a house, they look after those things very well knowing that they want to be better in the future. (VLS4)

Also, relating to history, the findings suggest that the San's marginalised and oppressive past makes some believe that their lives cannot improve even if they try. As a result, they have come to believe that they are not meant to be better, no matter how much effort they put into anything. Consequently, it is within this



state of hopelessness and helplessness that they have lost confidence in their own abilities and become apathetic even when opportunities to better themselves arise, as indicated in the excerpt below:

These people (San) believe in being spoon fed. Most of the San people live in other people's cattle posts. At the end of the month they are given toiletries and food for free, they have everything just for free. They believe in being given things. (BNS12)

It is also suggested that the apathetic attitude towards development efforts stems from the government's top-down development approach whereby people are not considered as equal partners in the development process. As indicated below, due to this paternalistic approach, the San might find themselves with development gestures that are irrelevant to their lives:

San eat the cattle we give them and the other one destroyed the house that the government built for her because she believes it will kill her because previously people who received the houses later died. They don't actually need these two bed-roomed houses, they don't use them, may be they can be helped with only one roomed house. (GCDWS2)

The other reason advanced for a mismatch in the results of the RADP relates to the government. It has been reported that the government seems to be promoting and cultivating a dependent relationship with the San. The development strategy that provides people with everything without engaging them has been commonly criticised because, as the Chinese adage goes, if you give a man a fish, he will eat once, but if you teach him how to fish, he will eat for the rest of his life. This dependent relationship is interpreted by some as a reward for having moved the San into settlements as can be seen from the statements made by a community development officer and a village leader below:

The other thing is that government gives them an impression that they don't have to do anything to improve themselves. They can even tell you that they don't want to work in Ipelegeng<sup>16</sup>. (GCDWK1)

In the past tomatoes were spoilt here, people left them to get spoiled. Only a few people sold theirs, mainly Bakgalagadi<sup>17</sup>. Basarwa they don't care because they know that they don't even have to pay for their water bills. (VLS3)

A GCDW in Sehunong related a story giving an example of entrenched dependency kindled by the government, as follows:

I met another lady and told her that her child does not have a pencil. She responded by telling me that the government told them to bear children and that they would be provided for. So it's not her responsibility. Another parent plainly told me that I should buy her child a pencil since I have money and I am the one who wants the child to write. (GCDWS1)

As illuminated by the preceding excerpts, it appears that most of the government's development interventions (the RADP included) do not aim to build capabilities such that the San would be able to take matters into their own hands. Rather, San communities are encouraged to become consumers of services instead of producers which perpetuate unequal power relations. As a result, some San in Khwee and Sehunong end up seeing themselves as incapable of helping themselves out of their undesirable situations, instead relying on external help.

It was further noted that in their state of apathy and hopelessness, some San in Khwee and Sehunong turn to alcohol and end up concentrating more on alcohol than their development. One elderly RADP recipient noted that:

As *Basarwa*, it looks like we do not have interest in developing ourselves. We are so much into drinking alcohol and I suppose that's the main thing that halts our development. People do not put effort in bettering themselves, but put alcohol first. (BNK5)

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<sup>16</sup> Ipelegeng is a government programme providing short term employment and relief

<sup>17</sup> Bakgalagadi is one of the minority ethnic groups found in Botswana

Surprisingly, this same old woman was selling traditional beer in her home even as she was criticising alcohol as an impediment to development. When she was asked why she was still selling the alcohol, she said it was the only way she could make a living. One of the RADP youth recipients also acknowledged that alcohol is a problem that interferes in the development of San people generally and that it is difficult to reprimand the youth as the parents are the ones to blame for their drinking habits:

... Our parents teach us to drink alcohol and smoke at a young age. So they can not talk to us now because they know it's them who taught us this bad behavior. (BNS4)

Sharing the same sentiments about alcohol, a village leader in Sehunong opined that high alcohol consumption even interferes with other community activities such as community development meetings where people are expected to discuss issues about their villages:

I think they are failing because most of them are alcoholics. You will find that in Sehunong, you will find somebody drinking in the morning. I always call meetings in the morning because in the afternoon they will be too drunk. (VLS4)

#### **4.9.2 Structural reasons**

The evidence suggests that the constraints to the San's development are not only attitudinal but structural too. The findings indicate that several structural constraints, such as poor monitoring and follow-up measures, far-away services and late delivery of services, lack of employment opportunities, poor infrastructure, and disjuncture in the system have rendered San development in Khwee and Sehunong ineffective and inefficient. These issues are presented in the following section.

##### **Poor monitoring and follow up measures**

Inefficiency in the monitoring and follow-up of RADP development projects was an issue that cropped up regularly in this study. For instance, 20 out of 24 San RADP recipients interviewed in this study complained that they were usually not

given follow-up training and that GCDWs seldom visited them to see how they were progressing. Follow-up and monitoring in this instance was considered critical for several reasons. Firstly, monitoring and follow-up perhaps could be used as a strategy to facilitate the adaptation/transition of the San people from their traditional economy to the current economy, which could be said to be a relatively new lifestyle for them. According to VLS1:

As we were in the bush, looking after other people's cattle, RADP called us to relocate here and we were provided with some services such as road, water, school, houses and cattle. But because of lack of encouragement, the cattle did not do well. Government workers should have visited us several times after giving us cattle. They should have come to train us on how we should handle the animals. (VLS1)

Secondly, it was hoped that monitoring and follow-up would serve as encouragement to the RADP recipients to continue with the project as they would feel supported, as indicated by participants BNS2 and VLK3 below:

The programme has good objectives. The problem is the implementers of the programme. They do not monitor projects well. They visit us once in a while. People should be encouraged and trained on the importance of keeping these animals. The government should do a workshop after giving out the animals to teach people about independence. (BNS2)

People in Khwee are always reluctant to do things, hence even for the RADP, they need to be pushed. If you don't encourage them there won't be anything achieved at the end of the day. Even for employment, they are not eager they need to be pushed. Even traditional dances and singing, they still need to be pushed, if they are left to do things on their own, they won't do anything. From long back; they have been ignorant when it comes to government programmes, they find it difficult to understand things hence they need encouragement. (VLK3)

These sentiments were also shared by the village leaders in Sehunong who lamented that their projects were not well monitored so that people could be equipped with the necessary skills. They said that people are given projects without training and because they were not trained on how to handle them, they failed:

It is amazing that the *Basarwa* are always employed as herdsmen, but they do a good job, but they fail if it's their own animals. They fail because they are not trained. They just need to be encouraged and trained and provided with necessities and they will be fine. (VLS1)

Furthermore, some recipients of the RADP in this study complained that even in instances where training was provided it offered little help because it usually took a long time for the government to provide the specific projects they have been trained for.

For instance, some recipients explained that they were provided with bakery training but then had to wait for too long to be helped start up the bakery; by the time the project started, the skills they had acquired during the training were forgotten due to lack of practice.

The issue of training appeared to have more negative effects on the livestock scheme provided under the RADP. According to some recipients, most of their animals died because they were sick. However, when questioned on what the animals had been suffering from, it appeared that they were unsure what the problem was. This might be related to the fact that they probably could not diagnose the sickness in time because they were not well trained in animal diseases and symptoms. Although there are animal health officials who are supposed to help in this regard, it has been reported that due to poor monitoring and follow-up they usually arrive when it is already too late.

It was further reported that follow-up for the development project is necessary more especially at the beginning of projects where beneficiaries do not have any means to provide food or medication for their animals. This is explained in the following excerpts from VLK2 and BNK12:

RADP should monitor whatever they give to people to make sure it's a success. For instance, if they give you cattle, they should also provide medication and food for the animals because there is drought. (VLK2)

....but the problem is that RADP gives help that sometimes is not enough. Imagine, if you are given cattle without medication and

water, as a poor person you can't be expected to buy yourself the medication. (BNK12)

Follow-up issues were also identified in the formal education sector. Some RADP recipients reported that RADP normally sponsor their basic education but if they fail on the way, they are not helped to repeat. This was mainly reported by those recipients who managed to go up to form five. They stated that they wished the RADP could give them a second chance; if they failed form five, the RADP should pay for them to repeat:

The programme should see how it can help children who fail. If you don't do well in form 3 or 5 that's it about you, there is nowhere to go. So the programme should incorporate this aspect and see how it can help those who do not do well. (BNK11)

RADP education is good. But I wish it helped those people who ended somewhere with education to continue furthering their education because we can't sponsor ourselves. Education is very important. (BNK9)

Other San RADP recipients complained that they are not given any allowance by the RADP when they are in tertiary school which makes it difficult for them to live in the city. Although the students receive a student allowance from the government like any other government sponsored student, they noted that whereas other students also received some money to augment their government allowance from their parents for them this was not an option:

The RADP is trying, it's just that there are some things it's not doing. For instance, they took us to school and they now do not help us with anything. We do have an allowance but it is not enough to cover the living costs. Other people are helped with payment of rent and food. (BNS5)

### **Service location and late delivery**

The findings also suggest that the San's development in Khwee and Sehunong is constrained by the late delivery of services. One of the village leaders in Khwee lamented it meant that poverty continued while they are waiting for the services to be delivered and they lose hope and frustrate efforts of the village

leadership. He indicated that projects in other places usually start on time but in Khwee they start very late which impacts negatively on the development of Khwee people:

These are the things that frustrate our efforts here. RADP for instance, last year, in the poverty eradication Pitso in Diphuduhudu where settlements were convened together, in other settlements, poverty eradication projects have started, their back yard gardening, goat keeping, bee keeping etc. have started already. But in Khwee, only last week did they bring two kiosks; bakery is not there whereas some people had applied for it. We don't have any explanation from anyone. (VLK3)

Late delivery is in part blamed for the hopelessness that makes people disregard development efforts such as education as indicated by school dropout rates, for example, as indicated in the following statement:

The RADP I can say it used to help us very well at schools by providing clothes, uniform and toiletry. But now it's difficult, children go to school with old clothes they were given long time ago, which show that the help we used to get is not there and children are suffering and run away from school. (FGK)

Also, RADP recipients in this study complained that the location of important services was one of the aspects that hindered their effective development. One recipient narrated his story of having to follow services far away and concluded that this could be discouraging to other people, which could make them miss development opportunities if they do not have strong determination:

It wasn't easy at all more especially by the time I was looking for sponsorship, the sponsorship people were mobile, they go all over the country. You hear that they are in *Mahalapye* but when you get there they have gone somewhere else. Also it was difficult because it was winter and I had to travel very early in the morning in the cold by half four in the morning so that I get a 6am bus to Francistown and will find that my file is not ready which means I will have to come back. It was also costly. (BNK1)

## **Lack of employment opportunities and poor infrastructure**

Almost all participants indicated that the lack of employment opportunities has adversely contributed to their lack of, or slow development. The RADP recipients in this study indicated that income is very important for development and since there are no employers in their areas, they have very limited ways to make money to improve their lives. This emphasis on employment by the San perhaps shows that they recognise wage labour, something which has previously not fully been a part of their traditional society. This could mean that they have now adopted some of the ideas of the mainstream market economy:

In Sehunong there are no employment opportunities, so really this delays our development. When you are working you are able to buy food and build a house for yourself, you are able to be independent. You can see that this guy who stays in that yard has built his mother a house because he is working as a soldier and when you look at the yard you see that they are developed. (BNS6)

If you are not working how can you be developed? Nowadays, money is what makes people develop, but when you are not working and you don't have money how can you be developed? (BNS).

## **4.10 Summary**

This chapter examined the San's perceptions of development in Khwee and Sehunong. It explored various conceptualisations of development and reasons why the San in Khwee and Sehunong continue to be less developed. The findings did not suggest any significant differences in the conceptualisations of development between the two research sites. The key findings from this chapter revealed that development is a politicised concept, located in the dynamics of power. The dynamics of power are evidenced by the participants' definition of development in terms of modernisation and using the dominant *Tswana* groups as the custodians of development. This understanding specifically negates the romanticised view of the indigenous people who are usually presented as only interested in their traditional lives and therefore with a different understanding of development. As Ndahinda (2011) argued, essentialised views of the indigenous people result in some scholars presenting the San as socially and



culturally uninterested in and unprepared for participation in current development and only able to survive in their 'natural' historical environment. Two conclusions can be drawn from these revelations about the San's construction of development. Firstly, instead of a peculiar type of development, the San need to negotiate their transition in a manner that accommodates their needs and aspirations. It appears that the issue for indigenous communities is to be able to negotiate that transition at their own pace, under their own steam. This could perhaps be achieved by inviting and strengthening the San to be equal partners in the development process. Secondly, perhaps this revelation now brings attention to their access to development resources and the question of whether the opportunities are equal.

The findings also revealed power dynamics in the San's pursuit of development. The San's definition of development negates everything that is their culture (Saugestad, 2001); they see themselves as 'inferior' and thus required to disqualify their values and norms in order to be admitted into 'developed society'. Explaining this scenario, van der Merwe (2009) argued that those who are dominated and stigmatised try by all means to live according to the expectations of those who dominate them, so as to conform. Freire (1972) terms this scenario 'cultural invasion'. According to Freire, cultural invasion is where the dominant ideas that mystify economic and social arrangements become part of a person's 'common sense'; they become the 'normal' so that nothing outside of that can be considered. This reveals the unequal power relationships whereby the 'developer' controls and dominates the whole process subtly or visibly.

The findings further suggest that, perhaps due to the feelings of inferiority in the development arena, some of the San in this study believe development to be an external process that has to be initiated from outside by the government. In that regard, as this group of San feel that they cannot solve their own problems without external intervention, this maintains the unequal power structures that make them what they are in the first place (Cornwall, 2008). This situation has thus caused these San to suffer from a dependency syndrome as they feel they cannot do anything for themselves. According to Ife (2010), this view of development represents the development relationship that existed between the

colonised and the coloniser, who was seen as having superior knowledge, expertise and wisdom.

As indicated in the chapter, development promises improved lives and living conditions which translate to poverty alleviation. In the next chapter, the participants' perceptions of the link between development, interventions and poverty are explored.

# **Chapter 5**

## **Experiences and perceptions of poverty in the RADP development**

Poverty is not just about lack of resources for development. It is also rooted in the inability of poor people to influence forces and decisions that shape their lives. Therefore, sustainable poverty reduction can only be achieved by empowering poor people (Castelloe, Watson, & White, 2002)

### **5.1 Introduction**

In the last chapter, conceptualisations of development were examined in the context of the RADP. This chapter goes on to present the participants' understanding of poverty in the context of the RADP. It seeks to answer research question two which aims to understand the perceptions of poverty, the extent to which the RADP reduces poverty for the San communities in Khwee and Sehunong and the possibilities for self-reliance through the RADP. There are three sections: this introduction which briefly gives an overview of poverty. It is followed by a discussion on the social construction of poverty which includes examining this group of San's description of their poverty and causes of poverty. Thereafter, a summary follows. In the summary, the main findings are briefly located within the literature.

The literature has showed that it is difficult to talk about development without addressing the issue of poverty. Literally, poverty and development are seen as two sides of the same coin, each presupposing and challenging the other (Oyeshola, 2007). According to Oyeshola symbiotically without development, poverty cannot be eradicated. Hence, many people such as the San are hopeful that if they get on the 'development bandwagon' their wellbeing will be improved as poverty is alleviated (Eversole, 2005).

Although many governments tackle poverty as a welfare problem, the literature on indigenous people suggests that indigenous poverty is not only a welfare issue but a problem rooted in the historical unequal power relations which privilege

some people over others (Ledwith, 2011). As such, poverty has been reported as a double tragedy for the indigenous people because, unlike the non-indigenous poor, the indigenous are not only marginalised because of their poverty, but also because of being indigenous (Lama, 2012).

Despite the San's hope for poverty alleviation through RADP development, the literature has shown a persistent pattern of poverty among indigenous people generally in the face of development promises. As such, some scholars have concluded that being poor is almost synonymous with indigeneity (Ader, 2013; Eversole, 2005; Lama, 2012). Ader (2013, p.162) however also reminds us that the persistence of poverty among the indigenous people does not mean that there are no indigenous people who might instead be wealthy, but the proportion of those in poverty is much greater than for the non-indigenous poor. Eversole (2005) further cautions that the situation for indigenous people in wealthy countries is no different; while living in wealthier countries may mean that the absolute poverty of indigenous people is lower, many still suffer relative poverty vis-à-vis the general populations in which they live.

Even though the literature evidences that poverty is a well-documented concept, it remains contested. The contentions surrounding poverty vary in terms of its definition, its causes and its solutions. The literature establishes that controversies surrounding poverty are even visible in large international organisations that are specifically meant to deal with poverty and development, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations organisations. Controversy is further witnessed among notable scholars in the field of poverty and development, such as Amartya Sen and Jeffrey Sachs (see Sachs, 2005; Sen, 1999).

While some define poverty in material terms, others focus on the non-material aspects. According to van der Merwe (2009), poverty may mean deprivation of material and physical means, which leads to wealth poverty. On the other hand, Sen (1993) defined poverty in non-material terms, as the inability to obtain minimal capabilities. Tilak (2002) further makes us understand that education (or lack of it) is an example of capability poverty which is a non-material conception of poverty. This definition controversy perhaps signals that poverty is

a socio-construct and can be well explained by those who are poor as they know what they go through. As a result, this chapter hopes to bring into light poverty dynamics as understood by the poor San in Khwee and Sehunong settlements.

Causes of poverty among the indigenous people seem to be multi-dimensional and contended. As shown in the last chapter, the causes can be understood as structural and attitudinal. As indicated by Saraswati (2005), structural causes of poverty place emphasis on inequality in access and power relations embedded in policies and the general environment. Through the lens of critical social perspective lens, Cherubini (2008) went further, in dismissing development approaches aimed at improving the life of those at the margins of the existing system without really questioning the unequal power dynamics that create those inequalities in the first place. Tauli-Corpuz (2005) further purported that the structural causes of indigenous poverty lie within a development paradigm which negates indigenous people's economic, political and socio-cultural systems and permits discrimination, social exclusion and continuing colonisation, among others.

Attitudinal causes of poverty mainly blame the poor for their poverty as it is believed they have attitudes that are pro-poverty. However, Rank (2005) questions this view of poverty because it assumes that the playing ground is level and that each person has equal power to influence the socio-political landscape and command equal access to resources of production.

## **5.2 Social construction of poverty**

### ***5.2.1 Non-San understanding of San poverty***

This section presents the findings on the understandings of San poverty by those who are non-San in this study. They include seven participants who were purposefully chosen mainly because of their positions in the settlements (councillors, village leaders and government community development workers). They understood the San's poverty in Khwee and Sehunong in economic terms, as a lack of material basic needs and income opportunities and seem to believe that the government has done enough to fight San poverty in Khwee and

Sehunong and that whatever is left is for the San to complete. For instance, some believe that San poverty can be dealt with successfully only when the San reject their poverty mentality. According to participant GCDWS2:

Poverty is not the same even when people are poor. Even the mentality is not the same. A non-*Mosarwa* parent even when poor they always try to be better, but a *Mosarwa* is a different case. (GCDWS2)

Various reasons have been proposed for the 'poverty mentality' in the San communities. Firstly, the persistence of poverty for the San in Khwee and Sehunong has been associated with their past history when they were serfs for the dominant *Tswana* groups. As indicated in the below excerpt, this social structure intensified these San's dependence on their 'masters' and they are thus still maintaining the *status quo*:

Basarwa they are comfortable with handouts and being poor because of the way they grew up. They were working in the cattle posts and being provided for by the cattle owners. (GCDWS2)

Participant VLS4 reiterated the above sentiments by commenting that the San in Khwee and Sehunong continue to facilitate *Tswana* hegemony over them by running away from school preferring to live in the *Tswana* people's cattle posts:

*Basarwa* they have a tendency of running away from school back to the farms where their parents are. I sometimes tell them that those cattle posts are ours, not yours, if you keep on running away from school, it doesn't mean they will be yours. Your parents tended our cattle from long back but they are still poor. (VLS4)

Secondly, others view these San's poverty as self-inflicted because they do not want to work their way out of poverty. It is believed that it is the San's behaviours which perpetuate poverty, as indicated below:

....the San are not yet there despite a lot of government efforts. I think they are failing because most of them they are alcoholics. (VLS4)

Participant VLS3 commented further that the San in Khwee and Sehunong are trapped in poverty because they do not want to meet the government half way, as they are too dependent on them:

People should be told not to be relying heavily on government so that they are sensitised. We are not going to be developed if we don't meet government halfway. Government programmes in Sehunong have really killed us. Imagine what will happen if government provides food, shelter, clothing, what people will do! (VLS3)

### ***5.2.2 San's understanding of 'poverty'***

In this study income or the lack thereof, appears to be at the core of understanding poverty. The way poverty is understood in this study seems to be influenced by how participants seek to contribute directly to their household livelihoods on a daily basis. As a result, poverty in this study is understood in economic terms which are associated with deprivation of basic material needs and lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities. It should however be noted that conceptualising poverty chiefly in economic terms, as is evident in this study, has its problems, more especially when discussing the poverty of the indigenous people. They are already an underclass and their poverty perhaps not only results from a lack of economic resources, but from unequal societal relationships. As such, fulfilment of economic needs may not deal directly with the deep roots of poverty, but only serve as a temporary relief.

The San participants in this study felt impoverished because they did not have access to a sustainable livelihood which could enable them to create income and a living. As indicated in the following excerpts, participants describe their poverty in terms of the everyday material things that are lacking in their households. Basic material needs such as food, clothing, housing and water were used to illustrate the extent of poverty in Khwee and Sehunong:

In Khwee we are very poor, we cannot provide ourselves with decent housing, let alone feed ourselves. (FGK)

I am poor because I cannot provide my family with anything, you can even tell from the kind of housing we have, it shows how poor I am. (BNS8).

As indicated in the following quotation, participants were hopeful that the RADP would change their situation for the better by providing basic needs. However, it seems for some, the perception is that it has failed so far to take them out of poverty and develop them:

....I am poor because as you can see, I don't have a house to sleep in, there is not even anything to eat. But I am stunned to have been discontinued from the RADP benefits given that I sleep in the open, on an empty stomach. (3BNK)

Although participants emphasised basic needs in their definition of poverty, they differed concerning what they meant by basic needs. It appears that some needs are more basic than others and are highly prioritised. This perhaps suggests that poverty is specific to contexts and what is a necessity to one person might not be a necessity to others. For instance, in the two settlements food was highly prioritised by many beneficiaries and was mainly used to define who is poor. However, such basics as clothing, shelter and water lie at different positions in the line of priority; for some it is water that is important while for other it is shelter.

Basic needs for each RADP recipient in this study were collated in the frequency table below (figure 5.1) to understand which are seen as more basic than others and were prioritised.



**Figure 5.1 : Basic needs frequency table**

Basic needs	Frequency
Food	20
Clothing	8
Shelter	13
Water	9

The findings of this chapter suggest that the effects and causes of poverty usually form a symbiotic relationship which consistently reproduces the pattern of poverty. For instance, lack of basic needs was not only seen as a result of poverty, but as a cause of poverty also. Nine RADP recipients in this study stated lack of water as both a cause and an effect of their poverty, as some development projects such as cattle keeping depend on water for the animals to drink, as indicated by participant BNK5 below:

The problem is that there is no water for the livestock they give people and the animals die. Therefore, there is no difference. (BNK5)

Furthermore, participant BNS9 commented that:

As you can see we are poor and we cannot create any employment for ourselves. But on the other hand, unemployment worsens poverty because we cannot have any income to fight poverty. (BNS9)

The findings also have revealed that, while the RADP recipients express poverty from a personal level, they seem to understand poverty as a phenomenon that is not purely individual, but a tragedy of the community. This was confirmed by the use of the collective when talking about San poverty in Khwee and Sehunong: '*ke masarwa*' which might suggest two things in particular about San poverty. First, that they understand their poverty as a class/ethnic issue perhaps because they are of a marginalised ethnic/class group, they are being deliberately marginalised into poverty and underdevelopment as a group. This is further discussed in 5.2.3. Second, due to the collective values (*ubuntu/botho*), the San in Khwee and Sehunong see themselves in communal terms, and therefore see poverty in shared terms so that community based poverty intervention strategies are more desired than individualistic ones

### ***5.2.3 The San's understanding of poverty as a result of structural deficiencies.***

Formal and informal structures in the society have been reported to mediate and limit these San's access to opportunities that will take them out of the poverty trap. The findings suggest that the San in this study see their poverty as in part a result of interrelating socio-structural deficiencies that allow and maintain unequal social structures, which limit these San's choices and define the way they can interact with the whole social structure. As a result, unequal power relations have been reported to produce structures that are deficient in that they perpetuate marginalisation of the San, because '*ke masarwa*'. This connotation is used to highlight the powerlessness of the San. Unequal social structures have been referred to in terms of social policy (formal structures) and social hierarchy or class (informal structures).

Some participants reported that, due to their 'inferior' status in the social hierarchy, they find themselves being mistreated by those belonging to the superior ethnic groups. This stereotyping presses them harder into poverty. The Khwee focus group discussed the limited employment opportunities of many San people due to the stereotyping associated with their ethnicity. This has been reported to limit the quality of interaction with the potential employers they depend on for their wellbeing, as indicated below:

Yes we have that wish as well to work and do as other people do. But what other people believe about us has tainted our name, even people who have a desire to employ us it's not possible due to stereotype. (FGK)

Participant VLK3 explained also that:

There are several things that we dream of as the VDC here that we think can lift people here out of poverty. Even when you go to Letlhakane offices (the sub-district administration centre), the moment you say you are from Khwee, you are taken for granted, you will not be treated like someone from other places. This is due to the place and ethnicity at the same time. These are the things that frustrate our efforts here. (VLK3)

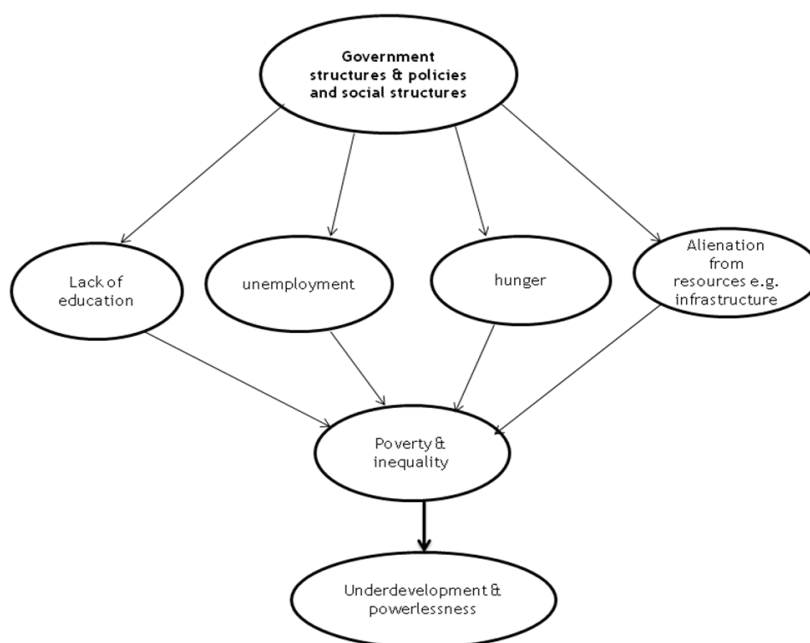
The discrimination and subjugation of the San is understood to have found its way into the government structure and policy and is used to privilege *Tswana* speaking groups with relatively good access to power and resources, which results in the continuous impoverishment of the San in this study. This has been suggested in the following excerpts respectively:

The problem with government is that they despise the San a lot, services are there in other places but for us, they don't care if we have services or not. (BNS6)

It's because we are Masarwa, everyone despises 'masarwa' isn't? You will realise those places occupied by Bangwato they all have good roads, but here we don't have one because we are Masarwa. The sad thing is that we can go for days without water, but in other places they can't go for days without water because they will die, but for us who cares if we die or live. Government is always talking poverty eradication but with us it's still continuing. (BNK8)

As depicted in figure 5.2., there is believed to be a cause and effect relationship existing between the socio-economic structure and poverty, as the distribution of resources and power are political. This diagram has been constructed from the analysis of the findings of this chapter on the structural causes of poverty.

**Figure 5.2: Structural poverty diagram**



The above diagram illustrates that the government structures, policies and social structures which the San depend upon for their struggle for livelihood were seen to limit their choices for opportunities to escape poverty. Instead the structures were perceived to perpetuate unemployment, lack of education and alienation from resources, which results in poverty and inequality. As this structure is maintained, this group of San seem to develop feelings of powerlessness and voicelessness as their demands are not listened to. This scenario therefore allows the unequal power relations to go on unchallenged, as indicated below:

For us we are not listened to and we are stuck in poverty. If we say what we want, no one listens. (VLS2)

Some participants further indicated that their alienation from resources and opportunities means that unequal power relations will be perpetuated and the San will continue to be subject to the power of others, as explained in the following quotation:

As you know *Basarwa* are not treated as other groups in Botswana. When we talk about high positions, it's very rare to see a *Mosarwa* in such positions. But you know in this world people make connections for their own, which means those in power will make opportunities for their people and us remain behind. (FGK)

Some RADP recipients in this study explained that their poverty has been perpetuated by being re-settled from the farms to the settlements without any consideration for their traditional livelihood. Participants complain that their livelihood was ignored and they now have dependency problems which perpetuate their subjugation by Tswana groups and the government. One older participant in the Khwee focus group explained his displeasure on being prevented from making a livelihood by hunting, as follows:

The reason we seem to be relying on the government is that the government has closed up a lot of things that could be helpful to us. One time we had a meeting with the wildlife officials, I asked them one question which they failed to answer. I asked them, there is chicken, goat, and cow, why are these things not finishing and only wild animals finish, is it not the same God who made them? They couldn't even answer me. (FGK)

Another participant added:

....people now have put their farms where we used to hunt and gather so this makes it difficult for us. We were eating wild stuff and were never hungry. I really liked my past life, now I am very hungry, now those things are no longer there. (BNS5)

#### ***5.2.4 Poverty as an attribute: The vicious cycle of poverty***

The findings revealed that the elderly in Sehunong were more inclined to attribute their poverty to fatalism. In this instance, poverty is not thought of as a condition but as a quality or attribute. The below excerpts demonstrate this view:

I am poor because I found my parents poor and when we grew up it was difficult for me to uplift myself, as you see I live through government hand-outs. (BNS 1)

Poverty is always after me. Even in my children it appears they will go the route I am going because I don't have anything to give them. (BNS7)

The San in this study associated their cycle of poverty with their inability to accumulate resources for the next generation. They note that the cycle of poverty continues because San parents are poor and as such can leave no inheritance for their children which could enable them to graduate out of the poverty trap. This perhaps shows how unequal access to resources ensures that power stays within the same groups and is illustrated in the following excerpts:

Some people at least when they die they can leave something for their children, but for me I don't even have a chicken to leave behind. (BNS7)

My children are going to be poor because I am going to die without any inheritance for them. Inheritance is the one that picks up people. We see this among the Tswana. Among the Basarwa I haven't seen anyone dying and leaving something for his/her children. (BNS1)

The participants dismissed the RADP interventions as unsustainable and useful only as a short term means of survival which cannot be passed on from one generation to the next. This perspective perhaps suggests that they felt the RADP has not given them any meaningful access to resources, as illustrated by participant BNK6:

When receiving the food ration, what will that beneficiary do, they will just rely on that until they die, and food cannot be inherited, that's it. (BNK6)

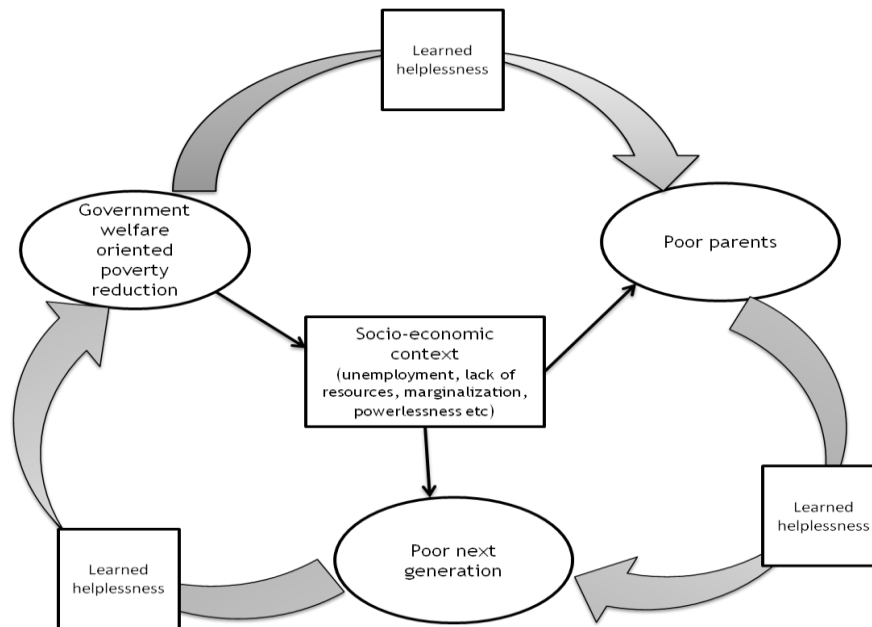
Participant BNS7 corroborated these sentiments and commented that:

Government hand-outs cannot be inherited and I can't leave anything for my children to uplift themselves. (BNS7)

The above can be illustrated by the diagram (figure 5.3) below which has been created from the analysis of the findings in this section. The diagram explains how the vicious cycle of poverty is believed to manifest itself in the San communities of Khwee and Sehunong. Basically, the diagram shows how the unfavourable socio-economic context that the San live in serves to produce poverty in Khwee and Sehunong. For instance, constant marginalisation of the San in Khwee and Sehunong is perceived to result in poor parents who pass on

their poor status to the next generation; in the process there is a learned helplessness which is further entrenched by the government's paternalistic perspective on San development.

**Figure 5.3: San's vicious cycle of poverty**



### **5.2.5 Poverty as failure to take available opportunities**

Another cause of poverty identified by the San in this study concerns individual characteristics. It has been reported that the San are consistently stuck in poverty because of their failure to take advantage of the opportunities made available for them. This view of San poverty tends to be more significant in Sehunong. This observation can perhaps be explained by the fact that Sehunong also houses the *Bakgalagadi* who seem to respond very well to the RADP.

It has been highlighted that the government is doing its part, but people are doing the contrary and they thus fail to benefit from the available poverty eradication efforts. This was expressed below:

Some people who received these animals they ate them all, so it is going to be like they were not helped. That means that if they die, their children will have nothing to inherit and poverty will trace itself back to them. This means we won't get out of poverty easily. (BNS1)

Participant BNS6 added further that the negative self-concept of some of the San in this study can perhaps be blamed for their poor response to availed development opportunities:

Some of them (San RADP recipients) for instance they eat the animals they were given and this delays their development because the animals will not multiply. I think they (San) always think that a Mosarwa has to be poor. (BNS6)

Participant BNS3 added that this group of San are not eager to be educated even when opportunities are availed. Blaming the San's poverty on their failure to make use of available opportunities was also expressed by some village leaders who pointed out that these San on several occasions have appeared to care less towards RADP interventions. For example, truanting and misusing things meant to help them in the future such as cattle.

### **5.3 Summary**

This chapter explored perceptions and experiences of poverty. The analysis of poverty has revealed the multi-dimensional nature of poverty. This group of San's understanding of poverty affirms that poverty is not an entity in and of itself, but is rather a result of inter-related factors that are normally influenced by the social structure. This San's poverty is blamed on the income disparity which allows other groups more access to resources than the settlements where the San are concentrated. For instance, in the settlements there are limited employment opportunities and as such people are unable to make a living. Income, or lack thereof, is at the core of poverty but is associated with the absence of food, clothing, land, power and employment (Lama, 2012). This is a classic example of how relational power privileges the dominant groups over the other groups as viewed through the lens of critical social theory. Based on this, Castellanos (2007) concluded that poverty among indigenous people is the result of unequal patterns of distribution of assets and income.

The findings show that poverty for some San in this study has resulted in feelings of helplessness, powerlessness and voicelessness. These feelings seem to reinforce unequal social structures which drive them further into



marginalisation. For instance, some see poverty as fate and think there is nothing that can be done about it. According to Hall (1996), these ideas are difficult to change because they have been sold as common sense - a term that Gramsci (1971) defined as fragmented, disjointed, contradictory thinking that justifies reality for the masses and go unquestioned. As they go unquestioned, fatalistic views of poverty reinforce and justify the divisions and power imbalances between groups in order to maintain the *status quo* (Freire, 1972; Ledwith, 2011).

As suggested by the findings, the San in Khwee and Sehunong had hoped that the RADP would help them out of poverty. However, most perceive it to have failed to offer a long term solution to San poverty. Some recipients just see it as a short-term relief measure; it makes life just a little better around the edges, but does not stem the flow of the real problems that create some lives as more privileged than others (Ledwith, 2011) .

Some participants have explained that the RADP has failed to both transform the status quo and change the societal structures that maintain the power inequalities that perpetuate poverty in the San communities. According to Lama (2012), the basic premise of structural poverty explanation is that society does not treat its members equally and fairly, and that there is no 'level playing field' for all members of the society. The arguments put forward by the participants in Khwee in this instance echo what Lama highlights. Some participants reported that they are not treated as other groups because of their marginalised position in society. The same was also reported by (Ader, 2013, p.144) concerning the indigenous *Mapuche*. Ader observed that the higher poverty prevalence among the *Mapuche* is a result of discrimination that keeps them from participating equally in the education and employment sectors. This view of poverty thus tells us one thing - poverty is not only a welfare issue, but a power issue also.

The next chapter examines how the San's status affects their development. Issues of participation and decision-making are explored.

## Chapter 6

### Identity, power and participation in development

Participation in development is both a way of doing development, a process and an end in itself. As a process, it is based on the notion that individuals and communities must be involved in decisions and programmes that affect their lives. As an end, participation in development means empowerment of individuals and communities. It means increased self-reliance and sustainability (Feeney, 1998)

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how San status shapes their development experiences and addresses research question number three. Most of the issues that emerge in this chapter can be located in the literature relating to power and participation in development. The literature indicates that in the contemporary development debates, community participation has assumed central importance as an ingredient for effective and efficient development practice. Community participation is considered critical because it represents power exchange from development experts to local communities (Makumbe, 1996; Mikkelsen, 1995). The chapter begins by this introduction which gives an overview of participation and decision-making debates in the literature. This is then followed by an exploration of the meaning of participation according to the San and reasons why people participate or do not participate in development interventions. Thereafter follows the examination of politics of decision-making power and identity and how what the San perceive about development policy outcomes.

Although some findings were located in the literature relating to power and participation, some were difficult to locate in the existing literature and thus form part of the contribution of this study to the field. For example, most literature (le Roux, 1999a; Nthomang, 2002; Saugestad, 2001) consistently assumes an automatic link between involvement of the San beneficiaries and empowerment without a critical consideration of the complex social structures, the way they influence people's conceptualisation of power relations and how

they are negotiated. The San have been under the subordination of the superior *Tswana* speaking groups which means most development decisions have been made on their behalf to nurture the superior-inferior structural relations (Nthomang, 2008). As indicated by Mompoti and Prinsen (2000), this relationship has been accepted as normal - the negative image of the other has been internalised as the image of the self. However the literature does not tell us how the San understand the notion of the participation and power issues embedded in the process of development, based on the inequality and marginalisation they have come to understand as normal.

Batten (2008) argues that the values which underpin community participation are based on the western values of self-reliance, equality and individualism. There has been little discussion on how to take advantage of the local values and socio-cultural perceptions and experiences of the communities when encouraging community participation. As suggested by Cleaver (1999), a much better understanding of the local norms and values that guide decision-making is needed to create a meaningful participation process.

Community participation traditionally existed within the *Tswana* setup. For instance, villagers would gather at the *Kgotla* and deliberate on their village's developments with development agents. However, even then, community participation was reported to exude power inequalities between the superior ethnic groups and the inferior ones (see Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000; Nthomang, 2008).

Currently, in Botswana the concept of community participation is widely spoken of by both the government and the citizens, the San included. However, it appears there is a difference in the way the term is understood, despite its popularity. For instance, the same government that encourages community participation has been accused of a top-down paternalistic development approach when dealing with San communities (Nthomang, 2002). Arnstein (1969) explained that there are different shades of participation which highlight citizen power and control, or tokenism. According to Arnstein (1969), tokenism as participation does not place power and control with the citizens for decision-making; rather, the citizens are given a voice which does not change anything if

the powerful do not want to act. This means that development beneficiaries can be consulted, but the power to implement their decisions or not rests with development providers. Tauli-Corpuz (2005) affirms that this perspective to development is common among indigenous communities. As a result, more often than not they appear to be subjected to shades of participation that do not give them control over their development. Instead the process appears to be clouded by paternalistic behaviours and disempowering approaches where development practitioners fail to understand community needs and opportunities through ‘the eyes of the end-beneficiaries’ (Rowlands, 1995) which reveals the political nature of development. ‘Political’ in this context is seen in terms of Hall’s description which explains that ‘politics is about power, who gets what, where, how and why’ (Hall, 1996,p.77).

## **6.2 The meaning of participation according to the San in Khwee and Sehunong**

There is some evidence that respondents in this study recognise participation as a necessity in facilitating development that addresses the felt needs of the RADP recipients. Although this is conceptualised in different ways, this group of San emphasise that participation in the RADP and any other development interventions will empower them at different levels, to control their collective development priorities. Despite common agreement on the importance of participation in development, it appears there are differing views concerning what participation means. The findings show that participation in this study is understood in two different ways, depicting different levels of decision-making power and control. Firstly, for some respondents, participation is understood as different degrees of tokenism which represent a top-down development approach. The other view presented participation as decision-making power and control where the recipients are seen as equal partners in a development partnership. The contention about the meaning of participation becomes even complex because participatory development theory does not offer a description of what an empowering participation should look like. The theory seems to define participation as any form of involvement offered to the recipients of development programmes and projects.

The findings evidenced that all the 16 recipients of the RADP with education levels lower than BGCSE<sup>18</sup> perceive participation in terms of different shades of tokenism where they are required to legitimate decisions already taken. Participants in this category commonly agreed that they are being given a platform from which to actively participate in the RADP decision-making processes, the same as for the other development interventions, because they are always informed about what the government intends to do for them. When asked about the sort of participation they are granted, the participants gave several illustrations which on a continuum are different shades of tokenism. The balance needed between the quality of participation and quantity seems to be disregarded. This can be deduced from what recipients BNK2 and BNS3 share below:

We are actively involved in the RADP. Whatever they plan to do, they inform us. There is nothing that is usually done without being informed or consulted. Even for projects, they tell us about them and we choose amongst what they have on offer. (BNS3)

Sharing the same sentiments, participant BNK2 added that:

Everything is fine, we are involved. The social workers assess us and bring the RADP developments. It makes us self-reliant because when they help you, you have to stand up for yourself. (BNK2)

The above excerpts show that in this instance participation is understood as information sharing and consultation. People believe that they are participating actively while in fact the decision-making power is not with them but placed somewhere else. This view of development perhaps shows how competing interests interact to construct a social system that is considered normal while in fact it privileges some people and disadvantages others. In this instance, if this group of San only have false power or control over their development decisions, unequal social structures can be perpetuated and the status quo maintained as the dominant groups advance their interests at the expense of the San, as expressed by participant BNK6 below:

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<sup>18</sup> BGCSE - Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (equivalent of GCSE in the UK)

The way RADP is implemented won't give a *Mosarwa* any self-reliance because the interventions are just delivered to us. We will continue in poverty even when government talks poverty eradication. (BNK6)

The findings however paint a different perspective of participation in development from those with an education level beyond BGCSE. All the nine participants with education levels beyond BGCSE conceived participation as involvement in decision-making. In this instance, participation seems to imply transformation of power structures and equality whereby beneficiaries are seen as equal partners in the development process. According to participant BNS6:

When it comes to development, the community should take the lead in controlling the process, government should act on the priorities given by the communities, not whereby things are just thought up in high offices and we are told about them. (BNS6)

Participant BNS6 went on to give an illustration in the following quotation to show that some development projects are just imposed on this group of San and they do not become effective as the intended beneficiaries disregard the project:

People should initiate their own development because in that way, they will do things they like. Imagine, there was a time when we were given pigs as an income generating project here, I don't know how we were given pigs, and now our VDC has to look after them on their own while they are community pigs (BNS6).

Reiterating the problems of sidelining the beneficiaries in development projects was participant VLK2 who had this to say:

There is nothing we started. This is because *Basarwa* do not act when you do not push them, they need a push to do something. If you start something on your own and want them to join, they always take a back seat thinking that it's your project. But if you involve them from the beginning, they can act. (VLK2)

Participants gave examples of where the village leadership would be invited to decision-making meetings to involve them but then when they got there they would find that decisions had already been made. They were invited just to lend

the process moral authority. This is evidenced in the deliberations in the focus group in Khwee below. It was reported that the Village Development Committee (VDC), which is responsible for representing the community in development decision-making is not involved properly.

Even at times when they say they involved us, you will find that they invite the chief, councillor and VDC. When you get there, everything has been thought about your village, you will just be asked, is this good for your village, instead of the councillor saying no, you should go and enquire from electorates, he will not. (FGK)

Poor participation and involvement strategies were also evident when village leaders were asked how they work with the RADP and in what ways are they invited to participate in the RADP processes. It has been revealed that, even though village leaders are generally considered to be critical stakeholders in the development processes, their involvement in the RADP processes is only tokenistic, as evidenced here:

VDC has a working relationship with the RADP. For instance, when RADP wants to donate houses, we are consulted as the VDC to help in the selection of a beneficiary who should be given the house. (VLS2)

Another village leader in Khwee added that:

Usually we are involved when there is a house to be donated, that is when we are asked to choose someone who can be a beneficiary. Otherwise mostly they just tell us decisions they have made. (VLK2)

However, the findings show that, although some participants value participation as decision-making and control, they prefer it in the ‘invited<sup>19</sup>’ spaces rather the ‘invented<sup>20</sup>’ spaces, as indicated in the statement below:

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<sup>19</sup> Those participation spaces shaped by state authorities or organisations in order to create a forum for citizens and beneficiaries who are invited to participate in development initiatives (Gaventa, 2004)

<sup>20</sup> Those participation spaces formed by the less powerful citizens, either to challenge the more powerful or raise common concerns that are not being adequately addressed by authoritative figures (Ibid)

If the RADP can go house to house as politicians do, to take views from these people, they can have an idea of what exactly are people looking for. This can help a lot, not to think for them, but taking their views. (BNS6)

The above sentiments were also reiterated in the focus group discussion, as per the below:

The RADP should understand that people are different and have different aspirations. It should gather people and put all its interventions on the table and let people choose what they want. (FGK)

From a critical social theory perspective, the problem with the invited spaces of participation is that mostly the ground rules are set by somebody else and to a large extent the direction that participation takes is geared from outside which could serve to maintain the *status quo* and protect the dominant interests.

### **6.3 Reasons why people do not participate in their development interventions**

While some participants acknowledge the importance of participation and want to participate in their development, several hindrances which limit participation were identified. Poverty is identified as the first hindrance to people's ability to participate. Some San participants feel that, since they are poor, they do not have any resources to contribute towards their development and hence they cannot make decisions that they cannot financially support. In regard to this, respondent BNK12 had this to say:

A person should be the one initiating his/her own development if he/she is independent and capable. But like I said, us in Khwee we can't do anything for ourselves because we are poor. (BNK12)

This suggests that agency of these San is not enabled by only providing them with spaces of decision-making, as argued by the participatory development theory, their capability also relies on how they see themselves in the complex social structure. As such, due to internalised powerlessness, they may not be



able to enforce their desires and aspirations even if offered a space within the existing structures.

Poverty as a hindrance to participation was also corroborated by a village leader in Sehunong who commented that even the traditional livelihood creation models have collapsed and left them dependent. They cannot contribute towards any decision-making, as indicated below:

it's just that currently we cannot do anything for ourselves because we don't have money to help ourselves maybe even through *mahisa*<sup>21</sup>.  
(VLS1)

Analysing the above statement through a critical social theory framework, the statement highlights powerlessness and submission to the hegemonic structures of the society.

A second hindrance to participation has to do with individuals' understanding of it. It appears that some people do not want to participate in development efforts because they do not think it is their responsibility. This perception perhaps stems from seeing development in terms of top-down approaches where development recipients are perceived as the objects of development processes. For instance, some parents do not want to actively take part in the education of their children as they think it is not their responsibility. This can be illustrated by a story shared by a community development worker (GCDWS1) in Sehunong who asked a parent to buy her child a pencil, but refused saying it is not her responsibility but government's responsibility.

The erosion of responsibility by community members has been blamed for poor development progress for the San and the perpetuation of unequal results in development for example in education. Illustrating this, GCDWK1 shared her experiences on participation below:

Parents do not want to take responsibility of their children's education. If the parents can be taught the importance of education,

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<sup>21</sup> A system of cattle lending, which was common among the Tswana-speaking tribes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Nthomang, 2002)

they will encourage their children. We have a homework policy, when I got here I found that they are not given homework because their parents use books to make cigarettes. I had to call a meeting to sensitise parents that education is not only at school, even at home students should learn. When we call PTA meetings some parents do not come, and the ones that do not attend the meetings are the ones whose children are truanting. (GCDWK1)

The findings also suggest that some San RADP recipients do not want to participate in decision-making concerning their development because of their learned helplessness and feelings of low confidence in their capabilities. They prefer the government to decide on their development path because they believe that even if they were to be given the opportunity for active involvement they would not be able to do it well as they are not self-starters, as indicated below:

But for us, it's just better if government just takes a lead on our development because naturally we are afraid of starting our own things. So it might be just better to follow what government gives us. (BNS5)

The above might be suggesting how ideas, feelings and beliefs inform how the society is organised and reinforce unequal power imbalances. The feelings of learned helplessness and low confidence as indicated above can possibly provide a good ground for the dominant to pursue their development interests as their power is not questioned. Skewed development actions will go unquestioned and poverty will be perpetuated.

An alternative interpretation of the above quotation could be that San development does not empower people to take control and believe that they can do things for themselves. It is only when a community engages with structures of social, political and economic power that it can feel confident enough to confront the structures that help maintain the status quo disadvantaging them. It is empowerment that can sensitise beneficiaries with this view, to make them realise the way unequal power in the society is perpetuated if the poor or marginalised do not confront structures that disadvantage them.

## 6.4 The politics of decision-making power and identity - *'Ke Masarwa'*

There appears to be a perception from the findings that the process of decision-making is not a neutral entity; it is a political privilege embedded in the societal structures of power such as ethnicity, gender and class. Hence, participation in development interventions can be used to illuminate and reinforce power differentials embedded in the social structures. While the findings show that the San in this study understand participation in different ways, the data suggests that generally their development is overshadowed by paternalism and disempowering mind-sets, as indicated in 6.2 and 6.3 above.

The disempowering mind-set advanced by government and development agents has been associated with the long term history of the San's marginalisation and exposure to prejudice which tends to be rooted in power politics. These unequal power relations are thus blamed for negative constructions such as *'ke Masarwa'* which connotes the San's marginalisation and victimisation. As evidenced by the following quotations, the social structure and government structures are blamed for perpetuating this inequality and making the San voiceless in their development. The complex nature of power relations have been understood to reinforce the dynamics of the development experience:

....other people's needs are always listened to, for us it doesn't matter *'ke masarwa'*. From the ancient years even in the house of chiefs, although Basarwa are the first people in this country, they are still not represented. Things are not going well here, just because it is a settlement that is only occupied by San people, who are without a name in Botswana. (BNK6)

The negative effects of the hierarchy embedded in the structures of power were also emphasised in the Sehunong focus group, as per the below:

We know that despite us coming first in this country, we know very well that we are despised and we are never going to have status *'ke masarwa'*. Whatever happens, we are not going to develop despite RADP. We are never going to be like other places that are remote but

not predominantly San. We are just going to remain like this while government is talking poverty eradication every day. (FGS)

Although paternalism seems to be clouding San development interventions through the RADP, some participants emphasise that participation is a democratic right and that being invited to participate means the San are being given their right. A village leader in Khwee reported:

....Imagine, our councilor can just go for a full council meeting without holding a meeting with us, we ask ourselves what is it that he is going to present at the council when he did not consult with us. This is done because, we are Basarwa we don't have rights. (VLK3)

Some participants further indicate that access to both the material and non-material resources depends on a group's ability to define priorities and ensure that they are acted on. For the San it is suggested that they are marginalised and thus powerless to enforce their claims for development. This is indicated in the following statement from a focus group:

Development should start from the people who need development. You should not think for them, you should hear from them. If you do not get it from them then it means whatever you are bringing is yours not theirs. You should ask them, what do you want, and they tell you but for us, it's a different story because '*ke masarwa*'. (FGS)

## **6.5 Strengthening policy outcomes**

The majority of the participants expressed the belief that their development interventions would be much more successful if they were exclusively designed for the San communities. It should be noted that initially the RADP for instance was called the Basarwa Development Programme and then it was only facilitating development for the San. As observed from the findings, there is a feeling that since the programme changed its focus from ethnicity to geography, the results have been limited. This was indicated in the Khwee focus group that since the RADP changed focus and combined recipients, the programme has been of little benefit to its San recipients.

Sharing similar sentiments to the above, participant BNK6 explained that the RADP is now inefficient because it is mixing recipients under one concept ignoring issues of power. According to him, where there is competition for resources, the San lose out when other groups gain. This was also discussed in Sehunong focus group:

I think those who joined the programme on the way after changing the name are achieving better than Basarwa and I think this delays the programme to benefit Basarwa. Maybe the social workers who were on the programme when it was still the Basarwa Development Programme are the ones who are now working in remote areas where there are not mainly Basarwa, that is why such places are better. Back then, the social workers were able to develop Basarwa, but now I don't think we are being developed. If the programme was still focusing more on Basarwa, maybe we would be much better, even if the programme was not solely for Basarwa, but if more focus is given to them we will be able to develop. (FGS)

Participant BNS11 added that:

I think if we were given too much attention by now we would be having *Basarwa* who are developed. I think RADP should have at least just changed the name back then but not including other tribes yet so that they concentrate on us first, maybe it could have benefitted us by now. (BNS11)

The same viewpoint was emphasised strongly by a village leader in Sehunong who suggested that the RADP should concentrate on the San at the exclusion of the Bakgalagadi:

We will be happy if the government helps us acquire a borehole which will only be used by *Basarwa* without sharing with Bakgalagadi to provide water for our animals. The way it is, it's like some developments can benefit only those people who have been despising us, then what use will be development to us? RADP should only help us because if we are mixed, our needs won't be significant. (VLS1)

## 6.6 Summary

This chapter examined how the San's social status affects their development. Issues of participation and decision-making are explored. Despite participatory development theory popularising participation as empowering, the findings show that in the case of the San in Khwee and Sehunong it has resulted in further disempowerment. It is evident that most recipients of the RADP in this study felt that they are not invited to be involved in any meaningful participation and also the recipients have not put in place structures that can facilitate meaningful participation on their part. Hence, the values that underpin participation such as democracy and decision-making power are left untouched making it easy to maintain the unequal social structures. As noted by Mohan (2001), participatory development maintains the centrality of external agents while denying its values. In this instance, the underlying implication is that people will be joining a game, the rules of which have already been decided because participatory practice is externally designed (Vincent, 2003).

The findings have revealed the multi-dimensional and complex nature of the concept of participation in development. The conceptualisation of participation in development in this study suggests different understandings of negotiation of power and control by the participants. In a continuum, the findings imply that the understanding of power and control increases with the level of education. Borrowing from Arnstein's 'Ladder of Citizen Participation' (1969), the findings suggest that those with a lower level of education conceive participation as different shades of tokenism while those with a higher educational level understand participation as citizen power. Although a cause and effect relationship cannot be established at this point between education level and the understanding of participation, Batten (2008) suggests that education/skills form the key conditions for meaningful participation. Berinsky (2011) also corroborated that education not only directly increases levels of participation, but also allows citizens to acquire the civic skills necessary to effectively communicate their concerns. As indicated by the findings, those with a higher education level understood participation as decision-making and control which

provide a suitable environment for communities to be able to demand development on their own terms.

When those in a position of power locate themselves at the centre of a development and participation process, they consolidate their power and perpetuate the unequal social structures (Crewe & Harrison, 1998). The claim is corroborated by the findings of this chapter which show that, due to the San's marginalised social position, paternalistic behaviours characterise their development. Development agents and government seem to be the main players of the RADP development, while beneficiaries become objects of development due to their identity, '*ke masarwa*'. Explaining this situation in a colonial context, Ife (2010, p.73) contends that, while there is no doubt that development agents and governments have brought useful skills and considerable benefits to communities, it is also true that they have worked within a colonialist paradigm which subtly reinforces the relative powerlessness of the communities they are working with. The findings further suggest that these San have come to accept the power structures which may be helping the status quo to be maintained. Scholars such as Campbell and Bunting (1991) explain that power is often used to shape people's perceptions in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things either because they can see no alternative or they view it as natural and unchangeable. In order for participation to serve its purpose of empowerment on the San, the false consciousness of the subordinated San needs to be transformed to release their full potential for participation in the process of social action (Ledwith, 2011).

In the next chapter, the main findings from chapters 4, 5 and 6 are linked to the research questions, the literature and the theoretical framework.

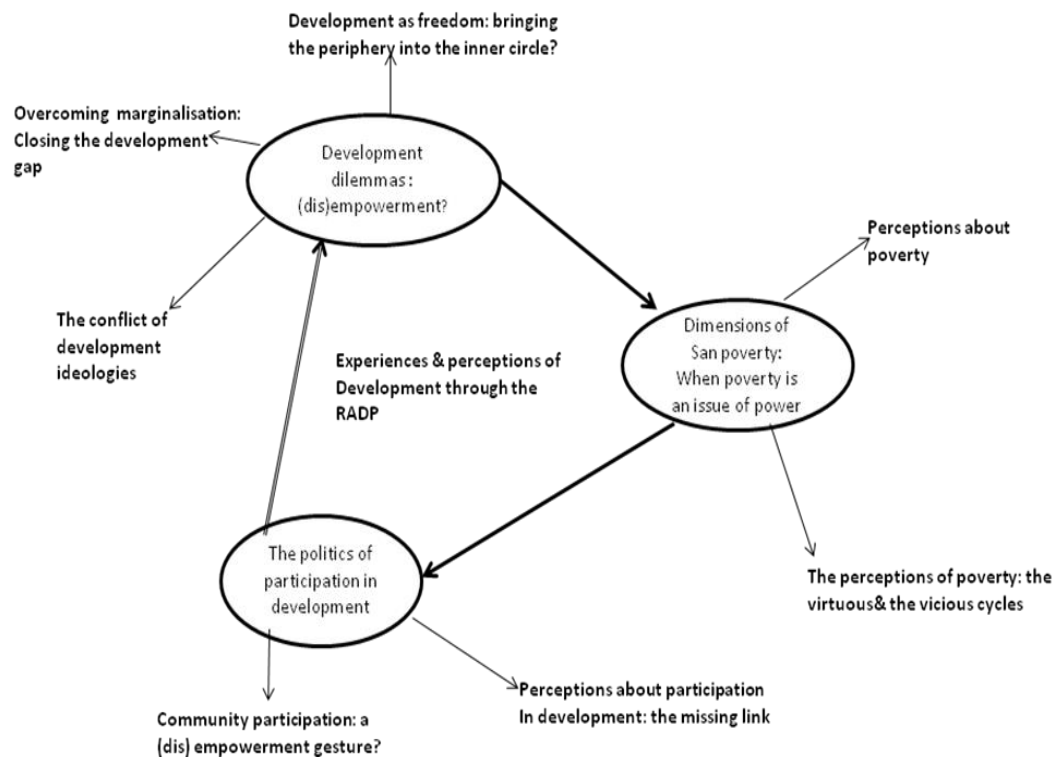
# Chapter 7

## Discussion

### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter brings together the main findings of the study, locates them in the relevant literature, and presents the argument for the theoretical lens (critical social theory) adopted in this study. The chapter is organised according to the three key themes emerging from the findings covered in chapters 4, 5, and 6 respectively. The themes are development dilemmas, dimensions of poverty and the politics of participation. The themes and their sub themes are summarised in Figure 7.1 below.

Figure 7 1: Thematic map



The research questions are addressed through the main themes and sub themes.



The first of the themes- development dilemmas- explains development as a site for struggle surrounded by controversies and dilemmas. One of the controversies central to the development debate concerns its empowerment nature as encapsulated in section 7.2.1. The empowerment nature of development for the San is questionable as it is located within the agency of the dominant *Tswana* groups. In this and other ways, as discussed in 7.2.2, the concept of development has continued to be based on the ideas and values of the dominant groups which maintain the interests of the superior *Tswana* which sometimes fail to accommodate the needs and aspirations of inferior groups. Based on this hegemonic nature of development, the oppressed have internalised their oppression and interpreted development as a transformation coming from an outside world of power. These power dynamics in turn raises questions that concern issues of identity and marginalisation as discussed in 7.2.3.

The second theme-poverty-seeks to understand how development, power and poverty are related. Poverty in this study is reported as a multi-dimensional issue which goes beyond simple welfare concerns (see 7.3.1). As discussed in 7.3.2, in view of the historical and social relations between the San and the dominant *Tswana*, poverty evolves as a consequence of power relations evident in the transactions between the superior *Tswana* and the subordinate San. Power dynamics in San development are also evidenced through the theme of participation politics as discussed in section 7.4. Participation in this study reflects the extent of power and control desired, as shown in 7.4.1. Thus, in viewing participation as empowerment (7.4.2), the nature of empowerment is questioned in contexts where the social structure amplifies social institutions and status positions that maintain the dominant and inferior relationships. Power dynamics in development and poverty alleviation is evidenced through the nature of participation afforded to development beneficiaries.

As explained in chapter 2, the theoretical lens initially adopted by this study was a combination of participatory development theory and critical social theory. Key tenets of these combined theories include the notion that all social relations are power relations (Mwanzia & Strathdee, 2010) and that the process of development involves power differentials between the 'uppers' (oppressors) and the 'lowers' (oppressed) (Chambers, 1997; Escobar, 1995; Foucault, 1980;

Freire, 1972). As indicated in Figure 2.1, using participatory development theory and critical social theory was thought to provide a perspective from which to understand how power interacts with the existing social structure in interlocking or dislodging forms of oppression. Attempting to utilise the two theories together in the same framework did however result in some tensions during data analysis. These tensions were around aspects of empowerment and participatory development theory in particular, to the point where the theory was found to provide an inadequate and unhelpful lens for the data collected and subsequently abandoned, as discussed in the next section.

## **7.2 Theoretical tensions**

Although both participatory development theory and critical social theory locate poverty and ‘underdevelopment’ as consequences of power inequalities, when utilised together serious tensions between the two theories became apparent when applied to the data collected in this study. The theories did not work well together in providing a model for change suitable for this study. Linking the themes to the combined theoretical framework, the participatory development theory seemed suitable in terms of explaining what was transpiring within the San’s development landscape but did not offer the appropriate model for change expected. For example, participatory development theory explained empowerment based more on an ‘add-on’ approach which only seeks to free individuals from the constraints of the existing structures. In this sense, the focus seems to be on changing the game without changing its rules. The problem with this assumption is that the San are not only left out of decision-making and need to be integrated, but are disadvantaged by relations of production and power (Mosse, 2007). As such, if relations of power are not addressed, rather it is just a question of changing the nature of exclusion by giving it a more implicit label and appearance. On the other hand, critical social theory provides a model for change based on a reconstruction of the social structure to deal with its disempowering nature (see Figure 7.2.)

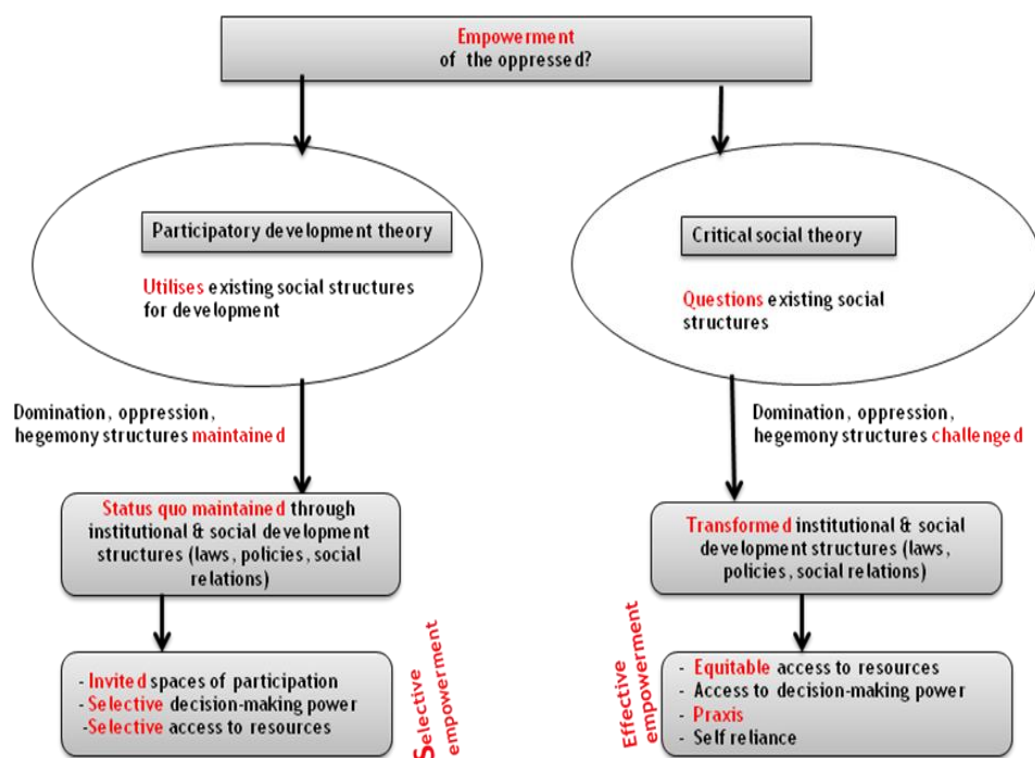
As illustrated in Figure 7.2, the problem with the form of empowerment envisioned in the participatory development framework is that it can unconsciously perpetuate the very disempowerment it seeks to combat.

According to Cobbinah (2011) and Castelloe et al. (2002) this stems from the way that generally participatory development theory fails to ask why it is that community problems exist in the first place or why some sections of the community are disempowered. Also, it overlooks the structural forces at play in empowerment (Budiwiranto, 2007). As indicated by the findings, San poverty and development concerns are in part consolidated on deprivation based on power inequalities that inform the institutional and relational structures. As such, a suitable theory should explain how notions of power and power relations (dominant and subordinate) influence how the San perceive themselves in the social fabric which in turn influences their perceived or practical participation and their conceptualisation of empowerment or development. This flows from agency embedded within both the institutional and relational structures which in turn constrain or facilitate options and preferences (Penderis, 2012). Bourdieu (1990) explained that the construction of social reality is determined by one's perceived position in social space which is shaped by the economic, the social and the cultural. As the San are considered socially inferior (Good, 1999; le Roux, 1999a), the distribution of decision-making power and resources between the communities and structures which transcend them determines what sort of participation (empowerment) they can access (Emmet, 2000, p.503). As argued by Budiwiranto (2007), due to the significance of values and beliefs, and cultural and ideological norms, empowerment begins with how people see themselves (internalised oppression). This aspect is downplayed within the participatory framework, whilst it is of critical importance in this study.

In addition, the findings (chapter 4 and 5) suggest that existing structures such as legislation create a vicious cycle of poverty for the San while ensuring a self-reinforcing virtuous cycle of development for the dominant *Tswana*. This stems from the fact that institutional structures are based on the interests of the dominant since they define not only what is normal, but also what is natural (Ledwith, 2011). As such, since participatory development theory analyses power structures simply by working better within the existing structures, the power structures are not transformed but rather are manoeuvred to accommodate the 'lowers'. Based on this, the underlying implication of the participatory development approach is that people will be joining a game, the rules of which

have already been decided (Vincent, 2003). As a result, while participation can potentially challenge dominance and inequality by moving the San's felt needs from the periphery to the centre, it can also be a space where dominance is (re)produced. If this group of San are invited to take part in the decision-making structures constructed on the values of the dominant interest groups, this might help groups to legitimise their demands while 'de-legitimising' the demands of 'others' (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). Figure 7.2 below represents the tension that occurred when using both the participatory development theory and critical social theory.

**Figure 7.2: Effective empowerment model based on PDT and CST**



As depicted in Figure 7.2, empowerment as envisioned within the participatory development theory utilises the existing structures to accommodate the needs of those previously excluded and marginalised. However, as indicated in chapters 4, 5 and 6, this group of San are not only left out of decision-making and need to be integrated, they are disadvantaged by various institutional and relational structures in the society. Thus, preserving the existing structures as indicated in the diagram (participatory development theory), means that hegemonic structures are maintained and their dominating effect is made implicit. This is

facilitated by the fact that if the oppressed are invited into the decision-making process without social restructuring, this will result in selective empowerment as they can act only on the basis of the opportunities granted by the dominant groups.

Critical social theory, on the other hand, as depicted in the diagram assumes that effective empowerment will only take place when there is a reconstruction of the social structure so that all the processes that perpetuate inequality are reconstructed to facilitate and maintain equity. In this way, empowerment is based on the capability of the San to define their development goals and act upon them with reflection (Freire, 1972). As the diagram indicates, all domination structures should be deconstructed before the San can achieve equitable access to resources, self-reliance and decision-making.

### **7.3 The development dilemma: (Dis) empowerment for the San communities in Khwee and Sehunong?**

Development is a popular concept but controversial. While some argue that development is meant to empower the indigenous people, others argue the contrary. According to Young (1995, p.1), the indigenous people recognise that, in its conventional form, the development process can bring benefits, such as redressing socio-economic disadvantage, providing better access to opportunities and enhancement of political and economic power. However, contrary to this, development has been associated with disempowerment of the same indigenous people. Scholars such as Humpage (2005) argued that development often involves confiscation of their grazing lands and forced sedentarisation. Thus, several commentators (le Roux, 1999; Saugestad, 2001; Young, 1995) have argued that development has relegated the indigenous people to disempowerment by failing to acknowledge their tangential culture and by defining development as everything that is not indigenous.

The controversies surrounding development (re)surfaced in this study. Development is illuminated as a site of struggle where elements of dominance, hegemony and subordination are realised and where decisions are made concerning development.

### ***7.3.1 Development as freedom: Bringing the periphery into the inner circle?***

The findings of this study have illuminated varying conceptualisations of development among the participants but did not highlight any significant differences between the two research sites. Divergences and commonalities were rather mainly evidenced through the ages of the participants across both sites.

The varying understandings of development reflected development as economic and material empowerment, assimilation and modernisation. Understanding development as economic and material empowerment was common across all ages. As indicated in chapter 4, this same understanding was popular even among the non-San interviewed. San participants explained that development means a decline in poverty, increased welfare, improved infrastructure and social services. Since they lacked these indicators of development, participants categorised themselves as not developed. Thus, no matter how the concept of development was understood, the eventual result was thought to be empowerment. In this sense, perhaps an invitation to development is interpreted as an invitation to join the inner circle of power. As explained particularly in 4.4, development means being in control of one's life and needs. In this context empowerment encapsulates the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence and control institutions that affect their lives (Narayan, 2002). Sharing a similar view, Rowland (1995) purported that empowerment refers to bringing people who are outside the decision-making process into it.

Khwee and Sehunong were also classified as not developed because they do not have the infrastructure, such as good roads, employment opportunities, electricity, water and other services including as schools and clinics. In Khwee for instance, participants mainly illustrated their 'undeveloped' status by referring to the lack of social amenities such as good roads, a secondary school, electricity and water for consumption. In Sehunong they indicated that they do not have a clinic and they therefore have to go to another village to seek medical attention. Emphasising physical infrastructure as an indication of

development is an understanding of it aligned to the modernisation school of thought (Nthomang, 2002). This conception of development reveals a lot about the San.

Firstly, the fact that the San did not relate their underdevelopment to 'traditional' factors such as culture but instead related it to a lack of 'modern' things (see chapter 4), is suggestive that the San are not stuck in the past, but do respond to changes that happen around them. It challenges the essentialised views which present indigenous people as socially and culturally uninterested in and unprepared for participation in development and as being able to survive only in their 'natural' historical environment (Ndahinda, 2011). This perception of development also questions the emphasis on the 'local' imbued in participatory development theory; in other words that generally development interventions fail because they do not take the local culture into account (Banks & Shenton, 2001; Green, 2000). As indicated in chapter 4, 'underdevelopment' was not explained by the participants of this study in terms of the absence of the San's culture but rather as a lack of 'modern things'. This suggests that the paradox at the heart of participation rhetoric is to deny that the San, even though they are indigenous, are still not immune to what is happening around their environment. Similarly, the constraints people face in achieving development as they define it are not only confined to local logistics but to the whole social structure. The San in Khwee and Sehunong responded with enthusiasm to the perceived opportunities expected from modern development.

The construction of development in this study raises questions about the San's access to resources of development, power and control, rather than the tangential nature of their indigenous culture to development, or their disinterest. It is well documented that agency and access to resources are interrelated factors in determining a community's development possibilities. As emphasised by Cobbinah (2011), the extent to which an individual or community can influence a development process depends on the power the individual or the community possesses. This raises important questions for the context of the San who, as indicated in 1.1, are subjected to the domination of the superior *Tswana* due to their ascribed 'inferior' status (Good, 2008; Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000). As explained by Mompoti and Prinsen (2000), subordination of the San has

intensified disempowerment and facilitated an elaborate evolution of patronage networks which, in addition to perpetuating and entrenching the dominant *Tswana* hegemony, has simultaneously denied the San meaningful development. This suggests that development for the San in Khwee and Sehunong is founded on constant power struggles. As indicated in 2.4, from the critical social theory perspective, power implies a relationship between groups and individuals (Mosse, 2007, p.7) which can be classified as 'power over' (Rowlands, 1995). As indicated in this study, this in part is influenced by the *ke Masarwa* connotation which is highlighted throughout the thesis.

Although these San's construction of development may suggest that they realise the benefits of development to address their plight, it may also be suggestive of internalised oppression. Internalised oppression according to Freire (1972) describes the way in which people who are systematically denied power and influence internalise images of themselves from the dominant and perceive them as 'natural'. According to Rowlands (1995), internalised oppression is a survival mechanism for those who are oppressed, it helps them fit in the society. In this sense, this group of San's conceptualisation of development as modernisation might be influenced by their realisation that in the current environment they have no option but to adopt what the superior assert as reality. From a critical social theory perspective, this indicates the invisible power rooted in false consciousness-the San cannot imagine any other development possibilities because they have been made to believe that the way things are is 'natural' (Foucault, 1980; Freire, 1972).

According to Preece (2009), the language of development is constructed by those with power to name and control. As such, it provided images of the San that confirmed they were a development problem unless they could transform themselves into the image of the dominant but without having access to the same benefits that the dominant *Tswana* allow themselves. This form of disempowerment is also confirmed by Foucault (1980) who argued that implicit in the developed and underdeveloped dichotomy is the position of the 'developed' as the subject, the giver and the creator of development, and the position of the 'underdeveloped' as the object. This stems from the fact that being the recipient of generosity means to be 'inferior' to the one who gives:



when you ask for something, you make the person from whom you are asking great and it makes you feel small (Saugestad, 2001, p.218). As the findings in this study indicate, this group of San simply perceive development as transforming them into a likeness of the *Bangwato* (see 4.2.1). They classify themselves as the ‘undeveloped’ and classify the *Tswana* speaking groups as the ‘developed’, who have the skills and experience to help move them from the periphery into the inner circle of the ‘developed’. These San thus seem to relapse into a culture of silence and voicelessness, and mostly play the spectator in their development efforts. It can be illustrated by the dependency and apathy demonstrated in the findings (see chapter 4). Commentators such as Smith (2003) and van der Merwe (2009) argued that it is a result of a social structure that consistently tells the ‘powerless’ that they can do little for themselves; only those who have ‘appropriate’ experience of development are capable of driving development. For Freire (1972) too, apathy and dependency provide a good ground for the maintenance of the status quo because the oppressed will not change on their own; they need to be challenged for revolution to take place. In view of this, the San willingly cooperate with those who oppress them by understanding the structures that oppress them as normal and natural.

Associating development with infrastructure and other physical structures is not peculiar to this study. A study among the community of Phek in rural Nepal revealed similar views towards development. According to Stone (1989), when villagers were asked to define development they consistently referred to concrete, visible structures such as schools, clinics, electricity and water systems. In this case, the villagers transferred the decision-making responsibility to the project’s officers. The same thing was observed by Lama (2012) when studying the indigenous people of Nepal. Stone (1989) is however concerned with the understanding of development that is based on physical materials because these things on their own may not change much for the poor. Physical structures may not be enough to upset the social structure that maintains poverty and underdevelopment in the first place. As illuminated by critical social theory, transformation only takes place when there is structural reorganisation (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010).

Making a case for constructing development as infrastructure and other physical materials, a common voice was that the lack of development resources such as infrastructure; electricity and water perpetuate underdevelopment and poverty because their absence negatively affects the creation of a sustainable livelihood (see chapter 4). For example, participant BNK8 explained that, due to the lack of water, electricity and a good road network in Khwee, potential employers have no interest in investing in their settlement which means they lose out on possible employment opportunities. Similarly, participant BNS7 explained that due to the lack of electricity, locals are unable to start small businesses that could help them become independent. Based on these illustrations, development is perceived as improved livelihoods and capabilities strengthened towards self-reliance and economic empowerment. This view of development is consistent with Sen's capability theory which emphasises that economic growth and expansion of goods and services are critical aspects of human development only when they enable valued *functionings*<sup>22</sup> (Sen, 1999). According to the capability theory, development should allow access to endowments that strengthen capabilities and freedom for 'valued functionings'. As explained by the San in this study, development for the San should provide them with opportunities to function in the sense of achieving the life they value, a life of sustenance and independence. As they have indicated, development should bring resources (e.g. infrastructure) to enable them to achieve a *functioning* (e.g. employment opportunities) to become independent. However, the problem with the capability theory in this instance is that it is not telling us what the San in this study should do to achieve the kind of development that is value *functionings* oriented. Neither is the issue of power and domination well acknowledged.

The other conceptualisation of development as understood in this study reflected assimilation. The construction of development in terms of assimilation was mainly common among the older San (45-55) in both settlements (see section 4.2.1). It was also evident among the non-San who participated in the study. For example, the prominent voice among the non-San was that the RADP is meant to improve the lives of the San so that they live like other Batswana.

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<sup>22</sup> Functionings are 'beings and doings' that one can undertake to fulfil their lives e.g. opportunities to be employed, being adequately nourished

Although ‘living like other Batswana’ may mean different things other than assimilation, it was evident that in this context it meant assimilation and there are clear examples. For instance, participant GCDWK1 explained that the San are not yet developed because they still consult traditional doctors when sick rather than modern medical doctors. Similarly, participant GCDWS1 reiterated that the San are not developed because they have not adopted the values and beliefs of the mainstream *Tswana* society. This is the same understanding reflected by the RADP (see Molebatsi, 2002; Nthomang, 2004; Saugestad, 2001).

For those San participants who understood development in terms of assimilation, they explained that the main objective of the RADP is to develop them through making them *Bangwato*. They indicated that they were relocated from the bush through the RADP, being told ‘*come and be like Bangwato*’ (see 4.2.1). When explaining what it means to be a *Mongwato*, the participants noted that it means a change of lifestyle from a traditional San lifestyle to a modern lifestyle which is practised by the dominant groups. As such, since the *Tswana* speaking groups enjoy the privileges of being at the core of the development process as they dominate those in the periphery politically, economically and culturally (Nyathi-Ramahobo, 2008), development in this regard was seen as an invitation to be like ‘them’.

Associating development with assimilation perhaps illustrates the understanding of development as prescribed within the RADP. Saugestad (2001) argues that the RADP seems to associate development with everything that is not San. This official position of the RADP in turn glorifies the ideas and values of the dominant which perpetuates their superiority. Through the lens of critical social theory, this is a classic example that confirms that the social order is founded on systems that present the values, aspirations and perceptions of the ‘dominant’ as normal and beneficial for everyone including the ‘oppressed’ (Campbell & Bunting, 1991). It sends the message that development is a concept of the dominant and anything that is San means ‘less development’ and is what Gramsci (1971) calls subjugation and hegemony. According to Gramsci, hegemony is where dominant attitudes are internalised and accepted as common sense and thereby legitimised in the minds of people. With hegemony, not only do the ‘dominant’ justify and maintain their dominance, but they also manage

to win the consent of those they rule over. The implication of hegemony in this context is that the San will not challenge or demand development in equitable terms. They will continue to be excluded and their needs side stepped which means a continuous cycle of inequitable access to resources and power and further alienation.

Generally, all the conceptualisations of development in this study can be summarised on the basis of the modernisation school of thought. Modernisation positions development in terms of a replacement of traditional values and livelihood production with modern values and economic growth (Nicholas, 2000). This view is problematic on two levels. Firstly, these material things on their own further marginalise the poor people and (re)produce objects in need of development as these things in themselves are insufficient to improve living conditions (Beneria-Surkin, 2004; Stone, 1989).

Secondly, infrastructure, housing and provision of food do not transform the social structures that resulted in the ‘underdevelopment’ of the indigenous peoples in the first place. Constructions of development must be understood historically, along with underdevelopment, as a social relation based on unequal access to opportunities and resources (Green, 2000; Rank, 2005). Material things on their own, without altering the social structures can only temporarily meet the daily needs of beneficiaries with no long lasting effects (Ledwith, 2011). Thus, it can be argued that the RADP’s failure to facilitate development for the San so far is tied to its failure to address the core causes of ‘underdevelopment’ and poverty. As corroborated by Preece (2009), development projects never manage to solve the problem they were designed to address because the problem is defined in a way that serves predetermined images of the problem and solution by outsiders. This often results in ideological tensions, which the following section discusses.

### ***7.3.2 The conflict of development ideologies: The convenient use of power against the powerless***

As indicated above, this study has demonstrated that the San interviewed did not have any significantly different conception of development rooted in their

tangential indigenous worldview. What the findings (4.2.2) suggested instead is that these San acknowledged that in the current times they would also like to be modernised so that they can potentially participate as equals in the current development realities. Although these San generally perceive development in terms of modernisation, contrary to the modernisation theory which understands development in terms of strict binaries (a shift from traditional to modern values) these San rather perceive development as a flexible interaction of value systems. You can modernise but still hold on to important traditional values such as collectivism. The same observation was made among the indigenous Orang Asli of the Peninsular, Malaysia who asserted that they want to be developed but without losing their identity (Nicholas, 2000). As reflected in 4.2.2, collectivism plays a very important role as it is seen to sustain the welfare of all community members by ensuring interdependence and cooperation. As illustrated by BNS6 for example, the RADP monthly food rations offered to individuals cannot make a difference because those individuals cannot enjoy the food on their own while others are hungry; they have to share the food. Similar sentiments were shared by GCDWS2 who stated that the RADP food rations have failed to significantly decrease hunger problems in Sehunong as they only last a few days rather than a month. These revelations reflect a contradiction with the value system embedded within the RADP. While collectivism as a value is not socially fixed, this is illustrative of the tendencies of development to epitomise the individualistic values and beliefs evidenced in the dominant's worldview (Preece, 2009). Accounting for this conflict of ideology, the participatory development approach introduces the idea that development efforts that begin in the external world of power and resources operate on different principles which are generally too detached from local contextual realities (Chambers, 1997; Parnwell; 2008), thus bringing unsuitable development interventions.

These San's collectivist values are consistent with the African philosophy of *ubuntu* and *botho* which insists that the good of all determines the good of each and the welfare of each is dependent on the welfare of all (Kamwangamalu, 1999, p.30). As explained by Kamwangamalu, *ubuntu* has guided most African societies including the dominant *Tswana* society which now is drifting away from the original intentions of the concept due to the current societal demands of

capitalism. While collectivism is at times seen as the opposite of individualism, the *ubuntu* philosophy does not necessarily negate individualism but emphasises that if the community is self-reliant individuals are going to benefit as they will receive strong support. This group of San are not the only indigenous group facing challenges with regard to their collectivist values. The Maoris' collectivist values are based on obligations towards embeddedness in, and interconnectedness with, the *whanau* (extended family) and the *iwi* (tribe) (Podsiadlowski & Fox, 2011, p.8). Podsiadlowski and Fox (2011) however reported that it has been difficult to accommodate a Maori collectivist orientation within a society predicated on a western form of individualistic capitalism. Collectivist values embedded in *ubuntu*, *whanau* and *iwi* contrast sharply with neo-liberal economy that is currently in operation in the development space. Neo-liberalism facilitates the extension of the market values that centre on competition and individualism, and argue that the society should subordinate all other values to the interests of the market (Horton, 2013). As a result, within this thought, collectivism has a small place as it is seen as planning against competition, therefore against freedom (Braedley & Luxton, 2010, p.9). In particular, neo-liberalism's reliance on the 'free individual' as the subject of its philosophy limits its capacity to analyse social relations that transpire among the San and the non-San in Botswana.

In relation to critical social theory, the contradictions of values demonstrate the continuous struggles by the dominant to ensure that their own values overrule and are constantly reproduced to maintain unequal power relations (Foucault, 1977; Freire, 1972). This is done to consistently confirm to the 'less developed' that indeed they are a development problem that needs to be solved by the ideas and values of the 'dominant' (Saugestad, 2001). The RADP operates within the values of those who are dominant so as to further tighten the San to the ideals of the dominant, in order to 'normalise' them. In this regard, development is possible only when the development beneficiaries aligned their needs and priorities to the value system of the dominant (Beneria-Surkin, 2004; Green, 2000). As illustrated in Figure 2.1 within these contexts the form of empowerment is only selective and the issues of concern to the powerless do not get expressed as an explicit demand within public policy (Mosse, 2007, p.24). As

a result, they are deflected from becoming threatening political issues, ensuring they remain inchoate (Lukes, 2005).

### ***7.3.3 Overcoming marginalisation: Closing the development gap***

In the focus groups, it became clear that since the RADP changed its focus from ethnicity to geography, it has not been able to address these San's specific development priorities and needs. As such, it has failed to significantly improve their lives. As explained in 4.9.1, the RADP was successful in settlements dominated by the non-San. In particular, this difference in achievement is associated with power relations surrounding transactions between the San and the non-San. These relations are reported as being responsible for the marginalisation of the San, which is anchored on the historical exploitation and discrimination fuelled by their indigenesness. The San in this study did not only explain their indigeneity as an essentialising cultural label, but as a label that depicts power relations. Based on this notion of indigeneity, many San people are not concerned that their traditional culture is being marginalised but that they are impoverished, marginalised, and exploited by the dominant groups as they are powerless (Suzman, 2003). In relation to these assertions, Beneria-Surkia (2004) and Saugestad (2004) explained that a relational understanding of indigeneity suggests that indigenous people are on one side of a relationship, with unequally powerful groups on the other. Reporting on the development of the indigenous Orang Asli, Nicholas (2000) concluded that, invariably, indigenesness is an assertion used by people directed against the power of outsiders. Therefore, issues of indigenous poverty are championed from a position of injustice, inequality and disenfranchisement (Plaice, 2003).

Asserting their powerlessness and difference from other groups being serviced by the RADP, the participants in the Khwee focus group (see 4.9.1) explained that since the community development workers despise the San, they do not efficiently deliver the RADP services which results in failure of the interventions. The incompetence of the community development workers is blamed on the victimisation to which the San are normally exposed. The community development workers are said to provide effective services for the non-San because their ethnic group is not despised. Also, the workers are said to respect

the non-San beneficiaries because they know that they will be challenged by them if they do not deliver appropriately, while the San will stay silent. This is one of the instances where this group of San show awareness of the powerlessness that gives them a raw deal in the development process. On this basis, it is likely that the RADP settlements occupied by the non-San have a higher success rate of poverty alleviation.

The above illustrations confirm that development and underdevelopment must be understood as a depiction of social relations where power is central (Green, 2000, p.76). The extent to which the San in this study can compete in this power game depends on the power they possess (Cobbinah, 2011). Sharing similar sentiments, a village leader in Sehunong (VLS1, see 4.8) implied that, since they cannot compete for resources at the same level as the *Bakgalagadi*, the RADP should have had its sole focus on them to compensate for their past injustices and exploitation. Mazonde (2001, p.61) shared similar sentiments by arguing that remote area dwellers comprise diverse groups of people, with very different incentives and motivations for resource use, and that they employ differing livelihood strategies. Also there is considerable variation in power and control of resources that might disadvantage the San.

Since the San are the hierarchically lowest ethnic group in terms of resources, power and influence, they cannot compete at the same levels as the other groups even on the basis of poverty. As indicated in chapter 4, the participants believe that their development and poverty alleviation can only improve if the RADP specifically focuses on them so that they do not have to compete for attention with groups that end up overpowering them. In agreement, Saugestad (2001) argued that treating indigenous people's issues as mere marginalisation issues fails to address the core issues that have resulted in their minority status in the first place. From the capability theory perspective, acknowledgement of human diversity serves the very important role of ensuring that development interventions meet the specific needs of individuals (Sen, 1993). Capability theory focuses explicitly on personal and socio-environmental conversion factors that make possible the conversion of commodities and other resources into functionings, and on the social, institutional, and environmental contexts that affect the conversion factors and the capability set directly (Clark, 2005). Sen



uses the term ‘capability’ not to refer exclusively to a person’s abilities, but to refer to an opportunity made feasible to convert the capabilities into valued functionings (van der Merwe, 2009, p.27). This view asserts that assuming that indigenous people can meaningfully benefit in the dominant society on the basis of equality and non-discrimination is insufficient to tackle poverty and underdevelopment issues. Sharing similar views is Wawrinec (2010) who explained that indigenous populations are motivated by remarkably different interests as their political economies are based on different modes of production. In view of this, disregarding different circumstances that enable the conversion of capabilities into valued functionings potentially perpetuates instances of poverty. The next section explores poverty.

## **7.4 Dimensions of San poverty: When poverty is an issue of power**

The relationship between poverty and development has been well documented in the literature. The main aim of development is thought to be poverty alleviation (see Eversole, 2005; Ministry of Local Government, 2012; Sen, 1999).

Many reasons have been advanced to account for the pervasive and persistent poverty among the indigenous people. Some scholars argue that poverty among indigenous people is a result of their proximity and remoteness from the market (Tuilaepa, 2006; Plant, 1998). Others posit that it is due to their tangential culture (Saugestad, 2001; Molebatsi, 2002; Young, 1995; le Roux, 1995). The current study challenges these views on the basis that poverty cannot be well explained only by economic behaviours or physical location within the market centres, it also requires an understanding of the social structure and its evolution, how socio-structural factors interact to amplify the vicious cycle of poverty for ‘others’ while leading to a ‘virtuous cycle of self-reinforcing development’ for the other groups (UNRISD, 2010).

Through the lens of critical social theory, this study sought to situate the San’s poverty and underdevelopment within an historical context and the existing social structure. The foundational conviction that underpins critical social theory

is that no aspect of social phenomena can be understood without relating it to history and the structure in which the phenomena is found (Crewe & Harrison, 1998). As cautioned by Remenyi (2004, P.190) chronic poverty will persist so long as it is treated as a welfare problem and until the poor's capacity for self-reliance is ensured and their voices heard in the corridors of power. This study suggests that poverty for the San in Khwee and Sehunong is not a wholly welfare problem, but a consequence of a wide range of socio-structural factors including prejudice and social inequalities in the social and economic assets (Figueroa, Altamirano, & Sulmont, 1996). Social structure in this study refers to the way social positions, social roles and networks of social relationships are arranged in our institutions such as economy and polity (Wilson, 2010).

#### ***7.4.1 Perceptions about poverty***

Poverty is a complex issue that even today, despite its long existence, has no universal definition. According to Izubara and Ukwai (2002, p.82) there is no universally acceptable definition of poverty because it is an expression of objective life conditions, a state of mind, and perpetual evaluation of self and others in a complex web of social interaction. Importantly, Carino (2009) locates the complexity of poverty in the fact that, in spite of the differing socio-economic circumstances of the indigenous and the non-indigenous, it is commonly defined from the non-indigenous concept of poverty, which is misleading as it reflects the hedonistic consumer culture of the market economy rather than the true wellbeing of the people. It is arguments such as Carino's that make indigenous poverty debates even more complex, as they present the indigenous people as uninvolved in the current market economy. This analysis is problematic as it omits power relations that are at the centre of the current development trend.

Poverty in this study is defined from a material and economic perspective. This understanding of poverty reflects how participants seek to contribute directly to their household livelihoods on a daily basis. As indicated in 5.2.2. San participants in both settlements felt impoverished because they were unable to provide for such basic necessities as food, housing and clothing which represent livelihood security. Thus, poverty in this instance was perceived as the failure to

satisfy needs or an unsecured livelihood. This view of poverty draws our attention, in particular, to the basic needs approach to it which focuses on securing access to minimum levels of basic needs and services. This approach insists that each person must have the minimum requirements for existence (Spalding, 1990). As argued by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the requirement for food, housing and other immediate necessities should be satisfied for people to survive and value their lives (Maslow, 1943). Although the basic needs approach helps us understand the importance of basic necessities in San poverty alleviation, it also emphasises mere subsistence without examining the structural and historical bases of San poverty. Additionally, it fails to explain why some people should survive on mere subsistence while others enjoy abundance. As such, the basic needs approach does not help us understand how structural deficiencies perpetuate poverty for some and plenty for others.

As indicated by the findings (see chapter 5), San poverty in Khwee and Sehunong is in part a result of institutional structures that privilege the dominant *Tswana* over the San. For example, the participants indicated that government legislation has banned hunting and allocated the land from which they used to gather food and livelihood materials to *the Bangwato*, which makes them more vulnerable to poverty (see 5.2.3 and Figure 5.2). Another example given concerns the distribution of employment opportunities that mainly privileges areas occupied by the non-San. Confirming this claim, Nyathi (2003) explained that it is the superior *Tswana* groups who control policy-making processes and thus decide who gets what, how and when. These nuances of epistemic privilege influence the general social structure by privileging some and disadvantaging others into poverty and underdevelopment. In this regard, giving precedence to subsistence over equity as premised by the basic needs approach can be problematic because it glosses over important issues of power which determine who can have what in a particular society.

As explained by critical social theory, every distribution of resources is based on power; those who are powerful benefit most from resource distribution and access at the expense of those with less power (Cobbinah, 2011; Mosse, 2007). This suggests that mere subsistence does not mean that people's life of poverty will be transformed; it just makes life better around the edges (Ledwith, 2011).

Programmes that make life better around the edges are not empowering the powerless the least; rather they entrench them more into powerlessness through false consciousness. In this instance, rather than the oppressed challenging for freedom and equality, due to false power they will perceive the oppressors as 'helping friends' (Freire, 1972). Put another way, this is the easiest way to get the consent of the oppressed to be dominated. As Smith (2003) argued, the ultimate way to let the colonised colonise themselves is by making them accept the *status quo* uncritically without questioning or rebelling. In this way, the oppressed will not seek to challenge the oppressive social structure because they cannot perceive an alternative (Freire, 1972).

Although the RADP was meant to improve the standard of living by addressing basic needs, most participants indicated that they are still living in poverty. It was explained that, due to the lack of income and employment opportunities, people are unable to secure income to provide for their material needs, which makes poverty pervasive. Drawing from Sen's capability theory, the lack of, or inability to achieve, a socially acceptable standard of living should be seen as a deprivation of the basic capabilities that allow individuals the means to achieve a life they desire and value (Sen, 1993). From this perspective, the RADP has not adequately empowered the San who participated in this study. As the findings in 4.9 suggest, the San in Khwee and Sehunong experience restricted functionings and opportunities for employment, literacy and decision-making and a lack of agency (choice) to live a life they can value - a life free from poverty. As a result, they have come to internalise their poverty as their identity or attribute (see 5.2.4). From the Gramscian perspective, when the subaltern internalise the labels of the dominant about them, they are imprinted as common sense (Ledwith, 2011) and they willingly cooperate with the oppressive structure to maintain those social practices that result in their oppression (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010).

As the findings in 5.2.4 indicate, the older participants feel that poverty is generational as it is passed on from generation to generation. For example, BNS1 explained that she is poor because her parents were poor which means even her children will become poor too. No matter how hard they work, they will still be poor. This illustration of poverty is consistent with the claims made by capability

theory that due to a low standard of living (deprivation) and helplessness (lack of agency), the oppressed see themselves as ‘patients’ diagnosed with the ‘illness of poverty’ (Sen, 1999). This state results in a culture of poverty that is characterised by a strong feeling of helplessness and dependency. The findings consistently depicted overtones of dependency among the RADP recipients in this study. For example, many recipients are of the view that they can do nothing to pull themselves out of poverty (see chapter 5). According to Freire (1972), surrendering to a culture of poverty conveniently nurtures the structures that perpetuate poverty, in that the poor do not question their circumstances but accept them through a false consciousness of *fatalism*<sup>23</sup>. This is a classic example of the oppressed not seeking freedom because they have internalised the oppressor’s image of themselves.

When the oppressed internalise the negative image attached by the oppressor, efforts to eradicate poverty tend to meet with discouraged and deprived people who are in no hurry to remove themselves from poverty. This can be illustrated by the perceived constant failure of the RADP economic promotion projects, such as horticulture and livestock keeping. As indicated in 5.2.5, the San RADP recipients in this study either do not fully care for the RADP horticulture projects or they eat the livestock given to them to keep as a form of future investment. One explanation for this situation might be that the San RADP recipients are not motivated because the social structure has convinced them that they can be no better, no matter how much they try. This fatalistic explanation of poverty is indicative of what is known as ‘adaptive preferences’ in capability theory. ‘Adaptive preferences’ describes how people internalise the harshness of their circumstances so that they do not desire what they can never expect to achieve (Sen, 1999, p.62-63). If the San are apathetic and dependent, it provides a solid ground for the hegemony of the dominant *Tswana* to flourish, which eventually amplifies the San’s alienation and marginalisation from development. As confirmed by Mompoti and Prinsen (2000), hegemonic relationships thrive well when there is a culture of silence where the oppressed are apathetic and dependent on the dominant. Describing this situation from a

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<sup>23</sup> The way in which subordinate groups are persuaded to accept inequalities by being passive and pessimistic (Ledwith, 2011, p.100).

feminist perspective, Rowlands (1995, p.102) explained that a woman who is subjected to violent abuse when she expresses her own opinions may eventually start to withhold them and eventually come to believe that she has no opinion of her own and mistake this for reality.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that other perceptions of poverty can be based on a 'blaming the victim' perspective evident amongst both the San and the non-San interviewed in Sehunong. For example, according to VLS4 (see 5.2.5), this group of San have not benefitted from poverty alleviation interventions because they are alcoholics. Similarly, GCDWS2 reiterated that these San are poor because they are dependent people who do not want to take any initiative (see 5.2.1). Some of these San shared a similar view. For instance, BNS6 commented that this group of San remain poor because, unlike other groups, they do not make use of the poverty interventions as they have the mentality that they cannot be any better. Other explanations accused the San of being irresponsible and as not having a positive attitude towards life (see 5.2.5). According to Freire (1972), for this group of San to blame themselves for their poverty is indicative of 'naïve consciousness' where the oppressed have insight into their problems, but do not connect them with structural discrimination. At this level of consciousness, people are likely to blame themselves. Blaming the San for their own poverty in this instance implies that they have a choice whether to be poor or not. This view of poverty appeals to the myth that success requires only individual motivation and ability (Feldstein, 1998). This view is problematic because it divorces the individual from the social structure. The processes of disenfranchisement are not individual but arise from social definitions over which the powerless have no control over (Mosse, 2007, p.20).

Although the basic needs and capability approaches provide means through which to understand San poverty, neither captures the fundamental causes of poverty or insight into how elements of the social structure interact to influence the nature of poverty among the San who are considered 'inferior and underclass'. The basic needs approach is only useful in explaining poverty in welfare terms because it is more about what people lack, not why they lack. The approach offers a limited analysis of San poverty because it overlooks power issues entrenched in the deprivation of needs for development. As posited by

Tauli-Corpuz (2005), poverty for the indigenous communities is a collective phenomenon with historical roots which cannot simply be dealt with on an economic basis. Based on this argument, the San's poverty is complex and cannot be dealt with solely in terms of the provision of basic needs. As explained by Castellanos (2007) the poverty of the indigenous people is deeply embedded in the unequal power relations that relegate them into voicelessness and offer unequal access to capability resources. From a critical social theory perspective, San poverty may not be adequately dealt with only the provision of material and economic resources. A poverty agenda that is based on economics and materials only maintains the *status quo* and prevents *praxis*<sup>24</sup>. It is through praxis that individuals and communities can interpret their situation for what it is and question the *status quo* (Freire, 1972). These ideas of poverty hence locate poverty within complex power politics, which are explored in the following section.

#### ***7.4.2 The Power perspective of San Poverty: The virtuous and the vicious cycles***

Although there are several studies on San poverty (le Roux, 1999; Ministry of Local Government, 2012; Molebatsi, 2002; Nthomang, 2002; Saugestad, 2001), little attention has been given to the role of power dynamics in understanding San poverty. As highlighted by McNeish (2005, p.236), indigenous poverty is a process seated in social relationships of advantage and disadvantage. As indicated in the literature (Nthomang, 2002; Young, 1995), the government's official position imbued in the RADP is that the San poverty trap arises as a result of their remoteness from the mainstream vicinities and their livelihood practices which do not match the current economic sphere. However, contrary to this assumption, this thesis suggests that, in Khwee and Sehunong, geographic location and lack of productive assets are only symptoms of an oppressive social structure; in Khwee and Sehunong, poverty is in part experienced as a social relationship established in economic and political relations and social processes.

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<sup>24</sup> According to Freire (1970) praxis means reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.

As illustrated in chapter 1, in Botswana different ethnic groups have different perceived status and power. Here power is used in a relational sense to highlight a situation where groups or individuals have ‘power over others’ (Mosse, 2007). The San’s marginalised position means that they are under the subjugation of the dominant *Tswana -ke Masarwa*. Based on this nuance, the San’s access to resources and decision-making power is perceived to be controlled by the superior *Tswana* who are at the centre of power. The power of the centre and the powerlessness of the periphery are thus seen to expose the San in this study to a ‘vicious cycle of poverty’ while the dominant *Tswana* enjoy a ‘virtuous cycle of self-reinforcing development’.

As illustrated in figure 5.3, poverty becomes a vicious cycle among the San because from generation to generation they are subjected to marginalisation and alienation from resources through policies that are assimilatory and paternalistic. Critical social theory helps explain that these assimilatory and paternalistic policies are institutional structures based on the superior-inferior social relationships. In this sense, it is easy to shelve the needs and interests of the ‘periphery’ and assert those of the dominant groups as they are commonly state-supported (Gledhill, 2000). Serving the interests of the dominant means that the life chances and opportunities of the subordinated are diminished, thus creating poverty (Ledwith, 2011, p.143). As illustrated in the findings, formal/institutional structures such as laws and policies are perceived to expose the San to poverty (see Figure 5.2). For example, the RADP was blamed for pursuing development through sedentarisation without ensuring a sustainable livelihood for the San whose livelihood initially relied heavily on natural resources. As such, poverty was regarded as the result of their lack of access to land in this instance. In the Khwee focus group, the San respondents said they are faced with difficulties in making any sustainable livelihood because they are located far from where they can obtain natural resources. It was further argued that *Bangwato* have erected their farms where the San previously obtained timber, hunted and gathered wild fruits for their livelihood (see chapter 5). Hence, the perception is that poverty is perpetuated by overlooking the interests of the San and excluding them from the political agenda of development and poverty alleviation efforts while meeting the interests of the



dominant *Tswana*. Confirming this view, Lukes (2005) commented that poverty persists because the concerns of the poor people are invisible and unpoliticised.

The assertions above draw our attention to the land poverty affirmed by other studies for indigenous people (Duncan, 2008; Humpage, 2005; Nthomang, 2002). As the privileged groups have more control over the development process, they continue to maintain the *status quo* by making decisions that favour their position while subjecting the powerless further into poverty. This explains how superior groups accumulate more to sustain their privilege while those who are underprivileged fall into a 'vicious cycle of poverty' (United Nations Research Institute For Social Development, 2010). As purported by Chambers (1997) who is a proponent of participatory development, the 'uppers' emphasise their interests and suppress those of the 'lowers' within the top-down development framework. The opposing cycles (vicious and virtuous) can only be challenged when the 'oppressed' enter a conscientisation stage that will enable them to argue for a fairer society (Freire, 1972). According to Mosse (2007) this can be achieved by making poverty a political issue.

In relating the 'virtuous cycle of self-reinforcing development' and the 'vicious cycle of poverty' to policy framework, Nyathi (2003) highlighted that it is people from the mainstream who control the policy making process, as law makers and bureaucrats, deciding who gets what, how and when. The facilitation of 'virtuous cycles of self-reinforcing development' by the dominant *Tswana* is backed up by the institutional structures as they are anchored on the values and structures of the privileged groups. In explaining how the values of the mainstream groups found their way into formal government structures and institutions, Crossely (2005), highlighted that, contrary to its claim to neutrality and democracy, the reserve of power generated within the state is more easily accessible to some groups than others and better serves the interests of some groups than others.

Some participants complained that they are deliberately deprived of access to government resources and services that could help them out of poverty just because *ke Masarwa*, people who are powerless. As indicated in the findings (5.2.3), it is believed that settlements are deliberately under-resourced from

services and resources that could lift them out of poverty, due to discrimination and subjugation. The examples given include electricity, water and infrastructural developments that improve wellbeing. In Khwee for instance, it was explained that the road network is so bad that it is impossible for potential employers to come and invest in the settlement and for villagers to travel out to look for employment opportunities in other places. As such, this scenario perpetuates the 'vicious cycle of poverty'. Accounting for this skewed distribution of resources, Mosse (2007) explained that social structures create status positions that define entitlements to resources. This implies that, since resources are scarce and highly contested, those who are of a lower status cannot bargain equally for such resources. As a result, due to limited resources, distribution of resources is a political issue and the most powerful have disproportionate access to resources.

Another example of deprivation of access to resources and services concerns employment opportunities in Khwee and Sehunong. Although the affirmative action framework (see Ministry of Local Government, 2010) recommended that the San should be given priority over the semi-skilled jobs within their settlements, the findings indicate that it is instead the dominant *Tswana* who are consistently employed in these jobs even when there are San who qualify. In this regard, the *Tswana* are permitted even further to enjoy what was reserved for the San while the San cannot enjoy privileges reserved for the non-San. This arguably will result in 'virtuous circles of self-reinforcing development' for the superior groups as they 'legitimise' their demands and 'de-legitimise' the demands of others (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). Furthermore, as evidenced in 5.2.1, San participants noted that since employers are from the mainstream groups, they hold stereotypes that they use to stigmatise the San. For example, they believe that once the San get paid at the end of the month, they do not return to work and hence, they are not employable. This prejudice shows how discrimination in society can be structured to disempower the powerless who, on the other hand, are incapable of successfully challenging the prejudice. It is interesting that the San in Khwee and Sehunong are well aware of the affirmative action framework that is intended to increase their employment

opportunities. However, they do not challenge or question government employers when they are sidelined and not given priority.

The findings suggested further that, in settlements occupied by the San only, poverty eradication projects are not properly implemented and monitored. This is said to be due to victimisation stemming from the *ke Masarwa* connotation. It has been argued that community development workers (who are mainly non-San) know that due to powerlessness, the San cannot challenge them even if things are not properly done (see 4.9.1). For example, as discussed in the focus group in Khwee, participants explained that non-San groups are successful with the RADP because community development workers work hard to help them as they do not despise them. This analysis interlocks poverty within social relationships of inequality. In agreement, Ledwith (2011) explained that the victims of powerlessness are vulnerable to the power of outside forces, since they have little control over events and conditions that are imposed upon them. This perspective of poverty is also evident in feminist theories where social relations within families and kinship are embedded within inequalities that produce highly gendered outcomes (Lukes, 2005; Mosse, 2007).

The relationship of domination thrives on exploitation and subordination which enables the dominant to impose, alienate and control the subordinate's relationship with the socio-economic world. This is simply explained by Wood (2003, p.456) who argued that people are poor because of others; they are unable to control events because others have more control over them. This hence suggests that, locating poverty problems only within the individual but not the individual's relationship with the larger social structure will not provide a more accurate picture of the actual conditions of the San who are under subjugation. As Prebisch (1984) argued, conventional theories of development and income distribution have a great flaw because they do not explicitly include in their reasoning the structure of the society and its mutations and the changing power relations emerging from these. In view of the power dynamics that surround poverty for the San, reversal of the situation depends on giving control to the San for their own development. This is embedded in the concept of participation which is discussed next.

## 7.5 The politics of participation in development

The question of who should control development resources and make important decisions towards development goals is an issue that has generated great interest in the literature of participatory development. The rights-based approach argues for the right to participate as a basic citizenship right which helps to protect and guarantee all other political, social, economic and cultural rights through an empowered agency of citizens (Gaventa, 2004). As such, participation has progressed from just a simple invitation offered to beneficiaries of development (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001).

Traditionally, the right to participate in Botswana is generally embedded within the *Kgotla* and *botho (ubuntu)* concepts which are based on respect and collective decision-making (Kamwangamalu, 2007; Preece, 2009). Structures such as Village Development Committees in villages are also an indication that participation in development is not a new thing in the development context of Botswana. The right to participation is also emphasised by other indigenous groups such as the Maori of New Zealand. According to a study by Reid (2011, p. 91), from a Maori perspective the right to participate is encompassed in the value of *tirorangatiratanga* (self-determination). The right to participation is also integral to the theoretical framework adopted in this study. According to critical social theory, human beings are subjects, able to think and reflect upon the world they want to re/create for themselves. This principle is also underpinned by participatory development theory- human beings can recreate the kind of development they want by being considered as active agents of their own development (Chambers, 1997).

### 7.5.1 *Perceptions about participation in development: The missing link*

This study indicated divergent views concerning the process of development and who has the power to initiate and control it. The complexities of participation in this study seem to be anchored in the meaning attached to the process of participation and what is hoped is the usefulness of that participation. Although these San mostly seem to attach importance to participation, the problem lies in

their conception of it. Participation in development is constructed in different ways, denoting significant implications for the entire development process. The San participants' construction of participation was mainly premised on the extent of control desired by individuals for their development. As such, this study did not demonstrate any common definition or description of participation in development. The slippery, exploitable nature of the term is well documented in the literature and according to Rahnema (1992):

Participation is a stereotype word like children use Lego pieces. Like Lego pieces the words fit arbitrarily together and support the most fanciful constructions. They have no content, but do serve a function. As these words are separate from any context, they are ideal for manipulative purposes. 'Participation' belongs to this category of word (p.116).

As seen in chapters 4 and 6, those with a higher education level (BGCSE and above) understood participation as decision-making power and control. In this case, if the intended recipients of any development project have control and decision-making power, they will be able to demand development on their own terms (see 6.2). This suggests a power sharing deal between all the stakeholders in the development process to challenge injustice. They explained that their democratic right to participate is however compromised because of the social structure that privileges the dominant groups over them. For instance, they claimed that their needs are not listened to because *ke Masarwa*, people who are marginalised in the society. As explained by the Village Development Committee members, because of the *ke Masarwa* connotation, even when they are invited for decision-making meetings, they find that they are instead lobbied to approve what has already been decided (see 6.4). This is a classic example of what Mohan (2002) described in relation to participation as consultation. According to Mohan, participation as consultation and information sharing is only used by the dominant to maintain the *status quo* and retain their privileges as they allow the 'have-nots' to be heard and have a voice while under these circumstances, the poor have no power to make sure that in the end their voice will be listened to and acted on by those with the power.

The findings also suggested an erosion of responsibility, together with apathy and dependency, which have been perceived to affect development opportunities among the San in Khwee and Sehunong. For example, most people felt that it is not their responsibility to fend for themselves because the RADP is meant to do that for them (see chapters 4 and 6). Another example as indicated in 6.3, some parents were reported to ignore their parental responsibilities of making sure that they attend school and have with them the equipment they need, even diverting what the children do have to meet their own needs. As GCDWK1 explained in 6.3, parents were reported to tear pages from their children's homework school books to make cigarettes rather than helping the children commit to doing their school work. Also of note, is the piggery project in Sehunong which ended up being the sole project of the Village Development Committee as it was shunned by the community (see 6.2). Due to this, the respondent BNK6 (see 6.2) concluded that the RADP cannot make any San self-reliant even though this is its objective. The RADP approach to poverty has instead perpetuated relationships of client-ship and dependency that reduce the San's agency and avenues for sustainable development (Mosse, 2007; Nthomang, 2002).

On the other hand, with respect to those with an education level lower than BGCSE, participation referred to consultation and information sharing. For example, participants indicated that they are usually invited for a *Kgotla* meeting to be informed of what the government is planning to do for them. Consultation in this instance basically asks them to fit their needs and priorities within whatever decision has already been taken on their behalf. This understanding of participation aligns with what is termed participation as tokenism by Arnstein (1969). Arnstein described tokenism as a stage of information sharing whereby the 'uppers' inform the 'lowers', and the latter are able to inform the 'uppers'. In this arrangement, however, although the 'oppressed' are informed and consulted, the decision-making power remains with the powerful as the 'oppressed' do not have the power to challenge the dominant in cases where opinions differ. This is the same concept of participation and decision-making embedded within the traditional *Kgotla* system. Although the *Kgotla* was believed to offer the subordinated a chance to

voice their concerns, it was the dominant *Tswana*'s voice that was given priority because of their social standing (see Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000; Nthomang, 2008). Thus, in the case of the San, understanding participation in tokenistic terms can be associated with helplessness or 'normality'; trying to be what the dominant have prescribed as normal. As explained in chapter 1, the San are historically the inferior and so though they would attend the *Kgotla* for decision-making meetings, they would not be allowed to express their views (see Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000; Nthomang, 2003). From this historical perspective, the San in this study will have internalised consultation and information sharing as participation because it is the only participation they have ever known as 'normal'. Basically this shows internalised oppression (Freire, 1972). Oppression from a critical social theory perspective refers to the subordination, marginalisation and exclusion from society of the less powerful groups by the dominant, thereby denying them social justice (Ledwith, 2011, p. 144).

There is compelling evidence in the findings that associates the understanding of participation with level of education. As evidenced in chapter 6, all 16 beneficiaries with education levels lower than BGCSE describe participation as different shades of tokenism while those with an education level at BGCSE and above understood participation as a demonstration of power to control and make decisions. The pattern along the lines of education level confirms the assertions made by Ali (2010) who explains that, even in its most basic form, education (or the lack of it) influences people's ability to understand and communicate issues. The same was observed by Berinsky (2011) who argues that education does not only directly increase levels of participation but also allows citizens to acquire the civic skills necessary to effectively communicate their concerns. Similar sentiments are shared within the critical pedagogy perspective - appropriate education should raise the oppressed's consciousness so that they reach the level of critical consciousness where they can recognise injustice and challenge it (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010; Freire, 1972; Ledwith, 2011).

The strong association of education level and understanding of participation perhaps suggests that critical pedagogy can be an important factor in ensuring an empowering development for the San in Khwee and Sehunong. In fact, as illustrated in 4.5.1, the San consider education an important factor in their

empowerment journey even though their enrolment levels are reported to be low (see le Roux, 1999a; Nyathi, 2003), suggesting that if more of them were educated, they would be able to combine their efforts and challenge the unjust status quo.

Although participation promises a shifting of power, some scholars caution that the empowerment that participation in development attempts to achieve might not be as straightforwardly liberating as it appears. What is known as empowerment in the mainstream discourse of participation might be in effect very similar to what Foucault calls subjection (Henkel & Stirrat, 2001). As such, this raises a contention that questions the extent to which participation can empower. This is discussed in the following section.

### ***7.5.2 Community participation: a (dis)empowerment gesture?***

As indicated in the preceding section, participation demonstrates empowerment. Empowerment in this instance does not imply gaining power to dominate, but the capability to influence social spheres and question the *status quo* (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010; Freire, 1972; Rowlands, 1995). According to those participants who understand participation as decision-making and control, the perception is that there has not been effective participation offered within the RADP and other development interventions meant for the San communities because-ke Masarwa. As explained by VLK3, this is what makes it easy for their issues to be sidelined (see chapter 6).

Most importantly, even though structures such as the Village Development Committee (VDC) are recognised within the RADP as a platform to engage communities in development discussions and negotiations, the findings have evidenced that the VDC only plays a symbolic role. Its extent of control and power is limited to what government allows. For example, as indicated by VLK2 (see 6.4), the VDC in Khwee is usually only involved when there is a house to be donated; otherwise they are informed of decisions made by government about their settlement. The same applies in Sehunong. It is thus evident that their involvement is more tokenistic than genuine. The problem with tokenistic participation is that it blinds the oppressed to reality. Due to false power, they



will not seek genuine or effective empowerment. In this sense, the oppressors camouflage their oppressive ways and through this can validate the status quo (Freire, 1972). As explained by Gramsci (1971) in this situation the dominant set a platform to win the active consent of the oppressed to be dominated.

In this study, development decision-making and control did not mean absolute control by the locals. The dominant are still situated within a position of privilege as ‘conveners’ of participation. Participants envisaged their participation (empowerment) within the ‘invited’<sup>25</sup> spaces of participation. The San in this context seemed to believe that government and other stakeholders should be at the forefront and invite them to make decisions about their development. This can be illustrated by what was said in both focus groups about the San being unable to initiate their development on their own. This perception on its own immediately demonstrates power differentials; as the invited, you will have to play by the rules created by the convener (Cornwall, 2008). Thus, the ‘invited’ spaces of participation can be disempowering because the convener largely determines the nature and extent of participation by setting the framework of participation. The ‘convenor’ is then able to shape the boundaries of participatory spaces, what is possible within them and which interests can be pursued (Gaventa, 2004). In this way, participation will not exactly give the control of development to the beneficiaries but implicitly maintain the *status quo*. As emphasised by Kapoor (2005, p.1207) pretending to step down from power and privilege, even as one exercises them as ‘master of ceremony’, is a reinforcement, not a diminishment, of such power and privilege.

The vision of empowerment and participation as envisaged by the San in this context (invited spaces of participation) is supported by scholars who are against the promulgation of the localisation cult (Reid, 2011). Vincent (2003, p.2) is hesitant about the idea that a focus on the local, however conceptualised and empowered, can solve local problems. She argued that, since local problems in part originate from outside, perhaps that is where some of the solutions lie. This

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<sup>25</sup> Gaventa (2004) informs us that ‘invited’ participatory spaces are designed and enforced by external forces and the beneficiaries are invited to participate while the ‘created’ spaces are claimed and constituted by citizen groups.

is not to negate the ability of the locals to change their situation, but rather insists that transformation needs to take place ‘upwards’ before those at the ‘bottom’ can have any reason to believe that they can have an effect on the wider origins of local concerns (Mazonde, 2001; Mosse, 2007).

## **7.6 Summary**

This chapter cohered the main findings of this study within the existing literature and the lens of critical social theory. This was necessary in order to explore the San’s perceptions and experiences of development based on the RADP.

Although empowerment is the main aim of development and poverty alleviation, the root concept, power, has rarely been a focus of attention in studies (le Roux, 1995; Molebatsi, 2002; Nthomang, 2002; Saugestad, 2001) focused on San poverty and development. This means that the significance of the different dimensions of power has not been well interrogated within development debates concerning the San. Power in this sense refers to a relationship between groups and individuals rather than an attribute (Mosse, 2007) and powerlessness in this context means subjection to the domination of others (Foucault, 1980). The contribution of this thesis interlocks the San’s development and poverty within the complexities of power dimensions rooted in the dominant-inferior narrative discourses. This approach challenges the effectiveness of development interventions and poverty alleviation efforts, such as those focused on basic needs, that ignore the effect of power or powerlessness such as the basic needs approach to poverty. As illuminated by critical social theory, any development effort that does not seek to alter the social structures that maintain unequal power relations, perpetuates domination and subordination underhandedly (Freire, 1972) maintaining and reinforcing diminishing life chances of the subordinates by creating poverty and reduced opportunities (Ledwith, 2011, p.143). In essence, this view questions the empowerment envisaged within the participatory development framework which fails to question power dynamics and only seeks to fix them. This drives attention away from the wider power relationships that frame the construction of local development. Resources (both material and non-material) are distributed through the various institutions and

relationships in society (Budiwiranto, 2007), which positions some actors such as the *Tswana* to influence who gets what and when. These dynamics need to be closely analysed, along with their history and the way they are reproduced.

The key theme of dilemmas of development brought together the complex issues that surround the concept of development in Khwee and Sehunong as encapsulated in chapter 4. Although much is known about development and poverty among the San in Botswana (Molebatsi, 2002; Mompoti & Prinsen, 2000; Nyathi, 2003), only a few studies (Nthomang, 2002) have sought to understand how the San perceive their development and poverty circumstances. The research therefore sought to contribute to knowledge relating to how the San in this study understand the concept of development and their agency in the development process.

As demonstrated in 4.2, the San in this study do not have any peculiar understandings of the concept of development away from the mainstream conceptions that involve physical structures, infrastructure, income and modern behaviours. As an indigenous community, conceptualising development as modernisation thus moves our attention from associating the San's poverty and underdevelopment with differing definitions of development or disinterest in the current visions of development based on their indigenous identity (Ndahinda, 2011). Rather this understanding of development raises questions that concern the San's access to development resources and decision-making powers, which are the critical bases for effective development.

As raised in 7.2, development is not a neutral concept but one which is politicised, suggesting that the process of development cannot be effective if the politics surrounding it are glossed over. The complexities of development are positioned within the ideological struggles embedded in power relations that operate within a framework of domination and hegemony (Escobar, 1995; Foucault, 1977, 1980; Freire, 1972; Gramsci, 1971). A development framework based on hegemony and domination reinforces asymmetrical power relations between the providers and recipients of development (Fanay, Fanay, & Kenny, 2010; Foucault, 1977, 1980; Freire, 1972; Gramsci, 1971). As encapsulated in chapters 4 and 6, the asymmetrical power relations between the dominant

*Tswana* as the giver of development and the San as the receiver of development was historically anchored on the San's indigeneity. Indigenesness in this study was not used to denote culture difference, but a complex relationship to power connected to history and ascribed social status. In this manner, a relational understanding of the San's poverty and underdevelopment posits that they are in a one-sided relationship with unequal non-indigenous people (McCormack, 2011). In view of this, in all contexts, even among the 'poor' and 'remote' social groups being pursued by the RADP; there is a considerable variation of power and control of resources which affects the San's development and poverty alleviation prospects.

As indicated in chapter 5, poverty alleviation is the main reason for the RADP and San development interventions in general. Poverty in this study is defined in terms of unsecured livelihoods where individuals are unable to meet their daily basic needs. Explanations to account for poverty in this study are various and premised on alienation, inequality and fatalism. Through a critical social theory lens, all the accounts of poverty in this study locate poverty within an unequal social structure and its mutations. As such, poverty is a process seated in social relationships of disadvantage and inequality (Castellanos, 2007; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002; McNeish, 2005; Tauli-Corpuz, 2005) between the dominant *Tswana* and the San. The social structure determines entitlements to resources and access to power which privileges the needs of the dominant while delegitimising those of the subordinated- ke *Masarwa*. This is formally justified through legislation and policy which are normally premised on the interests and values of the dominant (Ledwith, 2011). This hence perpetuates a 'virtuous cycle of self-reinforcing development' for the dominant groups while the San are subjected to a 'vicious cycle of poverty' (Foucault, 1980; Freire, 1972; Mazonde, 2001; Saugestad, 2001).

As indicated in 5.2.4 and 5.2.5, due to the persistence of poverty from generation to generation, fatalism and internalised oppression are respectively used to account for the incidences of poverty among the San in Khwee and Sehunong. Within critical social theory framework, this evidences the effect of power on the agency of the oppressed and the manner in which it unfolds to make poverty socially meaningful (Mosse, 2007). As encapsulated in 7.3, in this

sense poverty can be understood as a product of social relationships based on unequal power. Simply, this view emphasises that people are poor because of others as they are unable to control events since others have more control (Wood, 2003) and then raises issues of participation which are believed to confer development control and decision-making power on the powerless.

Although participation is morally appealing and politically acceptable (Green, 2000), the current study has raised important questions that challenge the philosophy of participation in development. Many of the past studies (see le Roux, 1995; Molebatsi, 2002; Nthomang, 2002; Saugestad, 2001) on the San recommended that participatory development is the panacea for the effective development of the San. However, this recommendation is problematic because empowerment in this framework is conceptualised on the basis of 'add-on' basis, rather than for transformative purposes. As illustrated in figure 7.2, effective empowerment requires a reconstruction of the social structure (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010).

The concept of participation as reported in 7.4 demonstrates the complexities of power relations which cannot be ignored when exploring an effective form of development. As explained using critical social theory lens, ignoring power complexities only encourages good grounds for internalised oppression and selective participation and the dominant have the consent of the oppressed to dominate them through hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). Gaventa (2004) thus cautions that participation in development sometimes evolves as underhanded disempowerment because in many instances development projects and programmes that appear to be participatory are only participatory when the ideas of the oppressed are aligned to those of the oppressors.

This study also makes a link between the understanding of participation in development and education level (see 7.4.1). This link speaks volumes about the role of critical pedagogy in platforms that seek to empower the oppressed. As argued by Berinsky (2011) and Freire (1972), appropriate education enables citizens to acquire the civic skills necessary to effectively communicate their concerns and question their circumstances. As indicated in chapter 6, those participants with a higher education level seemed to question their

circumstances on the basis of unequal power relations while those with a lower education level only accepted participation in tokenistic terms.

The next and final chapter draws conclusions and provides recommendations and implications from the study.

# **Chapter 8**

## **Conclusions ,implications and recommendations**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter serves to bring together the major findings of this study, draw conclusions on them and highlight their implications (see 8.2-8.4). Further on, recommendations are given in 8.6.

The main purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of the San in Khwee and Sehunong with regard to their development through the RADP. These perceptions and experiences were explored so as to understand possible reasons why the San in Khwee and Sehunong have been trapped in poverty despite several development interventions including the RADP. The study analysed these issues within a critical social theory framework. The main assumption of critical social theory is that all social relations are power relations and as such events in society are firmly situated within power struggles. As indicated in chapters 4 and 6, the development landscape of the San is built on a relationship of unequal power; the dominant *Tswana* as the ‘givers’ of development and the San as the ‘receivers’ because of their inferior position within the Botswana society.

In seeking to understand the San’s development experiences and perceptions in Khwee and Sehunong, a qualitative research framework was adopted. A qualitative research design was preferred because of its ability to demonstrate a variety of perspectives and experiences (Punch, 2014). Also, a qualitative research approach was considered to be more faithful to the social world as it allows data to emerge more freely from context (Gergen & Gergen, 2000). By involving two research sites, Khwee and Sehunong, the researcher expected to find significant differences in the experiences and perceptions of development central to differences in the composition of the population of the two sites. However, in practice there were significant differences within sites, in terms of

age and educational levels, rather than simply between sites, as indicated in chapters 4, 5 and 6.

## 8.2 The dilemmas of development

**Research question 1:** How do some settled San communities conceptualise development?

Evidence from this study suggests that some San perceive the concept of development not as a depoliticised concept, but rather as a practice that thrives on power relations located within various institutions and relationships in society. Power in this sense refers to a relationship between groups and individuals rather than an attribute (Mosse, 2007). Thus the conditions of development/underdevelopment are located within the dynamics of power/powerlessness. Thus, in the context of the present study, development is a zero sum game between the dominant *Tswana* who are seen as the ‘givers’ of development and the San who are ‘receivers’ of development. From the Foucauldian perspective, this dichotomy already places the *Tswana* in a position of advantage and power. This is so because it asserts the values of the *Tswana* to overrule the less powerful communities’ values and instruct them on how they are supposed to be like in order to be considered ‘normal’.

Based on the above argument, several conclusions can be drawn regarding this group of San’s conceptualisation of development, as outlined below.

Firstly, these San perceive the concept of development as an invitation to join the power game, to move from the periphery into the centre of power. Based on this view, they define development based on modern behaviours and the physical things they see within the centre of power, such as infrastructure. As such, they conceptualise development as modernisation. This conceptualisation at least confirms that these San, like everyone else, are not immune to the changes that take place around them. Although they are indigenous, their worldview is evolving with the times and they are not stuck in history (Ndahinda, 2011; Odysseos, 2004).



On the other hand, understanding development as modernisation speaks volumes about this group's awareness of the official position of the government on development. Since the San are incorporated into a modern nation state, their development must also be seen in the context of the goals of that state (Nicholas, 2000). In this sense, these San perhaps seek to conform to the government's call to development with the hope that their situation will improve to that of the *Tswana* groups, whom the San see as modernised. This is an example of how people who are denied power and influence internalise the messages they receive about what they are supposed to be like (Freire, 1972; Gramsci, 1971). The dominant consistently ensure that their worldview overrules the less powerful and is preserved as 'natural' so as to maintain the *status quo* of privilege and the reproduction of inequalities.

Based on the above analysis, these San's conceptualisation of development suggests that their poverty and underdevelopment are not due to disinterest in the current ideals of development, but instead relate to their agency in the development process and their access to resources. It is well documented that both resources and agency form people's capabilities to achieve the development they aspire (Budiwiranto, 2007).

### **Implications**

The implication of these San's understanding of development as encapsulated above is that the concept is a construction in need of reconstruction so as to be meaningful and effective. Since power relations form the bedrock of the San's development, interventions aimed at facilitating 'development' of the San cannot be effective if power issues are downplayed in the process. As such, the RADP and other interventions need to transform and work on power relations bordering development. In this sense, rather than stand in opposition to the San's value system, the RADP has to capture a more hybrid view that builds on different value systems (Preece, 2009) of its intended beneficiaries. This may allow the San to negotiate their development transition at their own pace, in a manner that accommodates their needs and desires. However, this cannot be effectively achieved within the existing structures; there is a need for the

transformation of both the institutional and the relational structures as illustrated in Figure 7.2.

When viewed through the lens of a critical social theory framework, the findings of this study calls for a change of position, moving the San from the peripheries of development where they are development objects, into the core where they would have genuine control and decision-making power as actors of development. Based on this analysis, bottom-up approaches to development initiatives targeted at the San are critical. However, if they are just implemented on an 'add-on' basis, without transforming the social structure, such development initiatives will only be useful in furthering selective empowerment. Hence, the implementation of bottom up approaches to development is complex because it moves beyond the promulgation of the localisation cult (see Reid, 2011) to a transformation of both the institutional and relational structure. In this sense, transformation will need to take place even 'upwards' before those at the 'bottom' can have any reason to believe that they can have an effect on the wider origins of local development concerns (Vincent, 2003). Because of the significance of beliefs and values, including cultural and ideological norms, the process of empowerment begins from within and is rooted in how people see themselves (Budiwiranto, 2007). As purported by Mazonde (2001), the way the San perceive development is to a large extent conditioned by the manner in which the dominant *Tswana* regard them. As such, any viable transformation of their development should also involve the dominant groups.

### **8.3 Perceptions about poverty**

*Research question 2: What are these San's perceptions of poverty and what do they perceive as the role of the RADP in poverty reduction?*

Despite Botswana being classified as a middle income country, poverty for the San communities has remained an uncomfortable reality. As indicated by the findings (chapters 4,5), in spite of the RADP the realities of daily life for most San are marked by a lack of basic necessities, including food, housing, clothing, shelter and livelihood opportunities most notably employment. As such, this

group's perception of poverty is mainly economic in nature as it is defined through the lack of basic necessities, which are mainly economically satisfied. This understanding of poverty is supported by most poverty alleviation programmes and projects (including the RADP) which concentrate on changing the behaviours of the poor from traditional to modern ignoring power relations in the process and doing little to bring about changes in the social structure. The current study argues that although poverty for the San in Khwee and Sehunong is evidenced through a lack of material resources, it is not a by-product of economics but a consequence of complex social interactions between the San and the non-San. On this basis, poverty for this group of San is experienced as a social relationship based on the historically established economic and political relations, and social processes that present systems of injustice as 'natural'. These processes are structural in nature because they determine the distribution of wealth and access to resources, which enable agency and capabilities (Budiwiranto, 2007). This suggests that if programmes and policies do not consider poverty as a matter of social relations, they fail to address questions of power and powerlessness embedded in the social institutions and structures. These social institutions and structures create status positions which define entitlements to resources which enable development (Mosse, 2007). As is the perception from most of the San in this study, the RADP has not significantly improved their situation but only served to reproduce the *status quo* of inequality by making the interests of the dominant *Tswana* society a precondition for poverty agenda.

Making the interests of the *Tswana* a precondition for the poverty alleviation agenda ignores the interests of the San and perpetuates hegemony and domination. This makes it difficult for the San in this study to negotiate their poverty alleviation and they end up being clients and objects of poverty interventions.

### **Implications**

The way we perceive poverty and its causes determines the way we can fight it (Castellanos, 2007; Eversole, 2005). If poverty is a consequence of unequal relations of power, then poverty alleviation policy should be grounded in

addressing power issues. Rather than policy programmes concentrating on changing the behaviours of the poor, policy should seek to change the conditions that sustain poverty in the first place. Based on this argument, San poverty should be politicised as a policy agenda and political will be sought.

Also, the RADP and development in general should seek to acknowledge the historical circumstances that led to the San in this study, being what they are today. Policy making should move beyond seeking neutrality but acknowledge the diversity and power differentials in society. Although the government is against an indigenous rights perspective, at least the marginalisation of the San should call for a development route that can empower them. In that respect, there is a need for transformation of policy making.

However, the transformation of policy making cannot be adequately effective if it takes place within existing structures. Rather, this process calls for a re-definition of the social structure in general to avoid an ‘add-on’ approach to the issues of San poverty. In this sense, even affirmative action cannot achieve the required results if there is no commitment from the power holder: it will only serve as a selective form of empowerment. In a similar vein, the San also should be empowered to see the necessity of challenging the *status quo* and freeing themselves. As much as the dominant are expected to let go of some of their power and privilege, practically, the dominant cannot change on their own (Freire, 1972), and voluntarily give way to the San. This could be a long-term policy objective because the social structure has made some hegemonic practices ‘normal, and ‘natural’ and the San have internalised them as such.

## **8.4 The politics of participation in development**

*Research question 3: What role does the San status play in shaping their development experiences?*

Participation in development is a critical issue. Participation is not a neutral entity, but a political privilege embedded in the societal structures of power. As asserted by Arnstein (1969) the level of participation citizens are allowed shows their extent of power. The way in which resources are distributed depends on

the ability to define priorities and enforce claims (Budiwiranto, 2007). As such, the ability of a group or community to influence decisions concerning their development is based on the power they have. As indicated in many sections within chapters 1 and 6, the San in Khwee and Sehunong perceive themselves to be at the bottom of the social hierarchy and as such are marginalised. Within this study, it has been demonstrated that the San's marginalisation has defined their development path in many ways that illuminate their powerlessness. They are subjected to paternalistic development grounded on hegemonic structures which render them voiceless and powerless. Their involvement in the RADP is characterised by tokenistic consultation processes which do not devolve decision-making powers to them. This is considered necessary and justified by some participants (see 6.3) on the grounds that the San cannot take control of their development since they are not skilled enough to drive their own development process. As illustrated in chapter 6, this is the view mostly held by those with a lower education level. Accordingly, this might be highlighting internalised oppression and powerlessness on the side of the San. Freire (1972) however argued that no person can empower another, people should engage in their own empowerment.

Even though those with a higher education level have a more critical view towards lack of participation, they do this from a weakened consciousness. They still envisage participation within the invited spaces, which may offer selective empowerment. As purported by Vincent (2003) in these spaces of participation the underlying implication is that people will be joining a game, the rules of which have already been decided because participatory practice is externally designed. In this sense, the 'host' has the power to control the whole process: what can and what cannot be allowed. This confirms what was explained by Freire (1993), p.109 when arguing that not all of those coming to consciousness extends necessarily into conscientisation; without curiosity and critical reflection it is not possible to reveal the truths hidden in ideologies.

As explained in 7.2, this study has indicated that, although participatory development is believed to empower those of lower status, its current philosophy can in fact perpetuate the very problem it seeks to address. Its empowerment concept is fixed on the ideas of the oppressors even though it

claims that it intends to transfer power from the centre to the periphery. In this regard, participatory development is typically empowering only when the oppressed align their needs to those determined by the powerful. In this regard, participatory development is not as empowering as it is believed to be.

### **Implications**

The findings of this thesis imply that there is a need to transform views about participation and participatory development. Participation in development should be well defined so that policies do not simply adopt tokenistic practices and then claim there is participation. This calls for a re-conceptualisation of the concept of participation in the RADP and other policy instruments. This means transformation and re-ordering of the policy structures.

Based on the above, the San in Khwee and Sehunong need to be empowered to be able to read their world and make meaning. As Freire (1972) argued, liberation does not mean an armchair revolution; the oppressed should be conscientised to see the necessity to engage in self-reflection and action. In this way they will not confuse any tokenistic practice as participation. The basic belief underpinning this assertion is that human beings are subjects, able to think and reflect for themselves, and in doing so transcend and recreate their world (Ledwith, 2011, p.99). As indicated by Inglis (1997), there is a distinction between individuals being empowered within an existing social system and struggling for freedom by changing the system. In the former instance, empowerment mainly aspires to change the San's conditions of poverty and underdevelopment by asking what they lack, while in the latter instance the social structure that remains the site for the San's poverty and underdevelopment is questioned and seeks answers to why the San are impoverished in the first place. As mentioned previously, for the San to be able to ask these questions they need conscientisation. However, conscientisation does not just happen; it comes only when people engage in critical reflection that causes them to act.

As indicated in chapter 6, education can play a critical role in this regard; not just any education, but education grounded on Freirean critical pedagogy ideas.

Not all education can arouse consciousness because education is not a neutral phenomenon; it can be used to serve the end of conquest distracting the oppressed from the true causes of their problems and from the concrete solutions of these problems (Freire, 1972). Appropriate education in this context is that which provides skills and knowledge necessary for the oppressed to expand their capacities both to question deep-seated assumptions and myths that legitimise the most archaic and disempowering social practices that structure every aspect of society, and to take responsibility for intervening in the world they inhabit (Giroux, 2007). Both formal and non-formal education can be utilised in this instance. These activities will be important in helping the oppressed recognise the necessity to fight for power and liberate themselves. In fact, the youth who have been exposed to different worlds and education could be useful in taking the lead of the activities.

## **8.5 Limitations of the study**

Although San poverty and under-development is an issue that is in evidence in all San communities, a national scale study was beyond the realms of this study due to practicalities such as time and financial constraints. As such, this study used a small sample size which cannot be representative of all San communities in Botswana. As this study was based only on the San in Khwee and Sehunong, complex issues of development evident in other San communities have not been interrogated. As such, this study has a limitation of scope.

Also, the study was mainly premised on the RADP, which means that equally important development and poverty issues in other programmes could not be well explored. In addition, the RADP is a government programme; as such developments pursued by non-governmental organisations were not considered even though they might be equally important.

## **8.6 Contributions**

In this thesis, I have sought to understand why some development initiatives have failed to address the San's situation of poverty as well as the explanations

the San in Khwee and Sehunong offer to account for their situation. Based on these aims, this study has made both theoretical and practical contributions.

Although poverty and the San's underdevelopment have been widely researched, issues of power have not been adequately focused on, with previous studies largely favouring matters of culture. This study does not dismiss the importance of culture in the development context, but argues that unequal power is at the centre of the development failure and San poverty in Khwee and Sehunong. Thus, poverty and underdevelopment are not economic in their mutation, but are by-products of unequal power which shows a struggle of class interest. As such, the solution to their poverty does not only lie in the simple provision of physical materials, but freedom from the socio-structural constraints starting with the legislature.

This study understands that the San's poverty problems are not only a consequence of culture. The study has demonstrated that the San in Khwee and Sehunong are aware of the environment they live in and that they respond to the environment to be able to meet their needs and be relevant in the twenty first century.

In addition, this study has indicated that, although participatory development is mostly embraced as a panacea for San development, the way it is envisioned is only applicable as an 'add-on' which leaves the very structures responsible for the existing unequal power relations intact. In this regard, the philosophy of participatory development is just to change the rules of the game but not the game itself. This only makes power relations implicit, but still operational.

Applying a critical social theory perspective to the development landscape of the San in Khwee and Sehunong revealed a complex methodological implication for participatory development. This study suggested that participatory development theory only describes what transpires within development processes by explaining who has decision-making power, who is excluded and needs to be included, and how the existing structures can be made more inclusive. This perspective is problematic because the San in this study are not only left out of



decision-making and need to be integrated; their exclusion is a consequence of relations of power embedded both in the institutional and relational social structures. As such concentrating only on involving them in decision-making platforms within the existing structures only serve to facilitate the same disempowerment that participatory development approach seeks to resolve. This calls for a re-evaluation of the approach to development in order to strengthen it to tackle the disempowerment it intends to fight.

## **8.7 Recommendations for further research**

This thesis opens several avenues for further research for effective policy. As indicated in chapter 6, and 7.5, participation is a very important aspect of development but it is not always as effective as it is believed to be. Considering issues of internalised oppression, future research may seek to explore the ways in which the San can be conscientised to understand that domination is not natural but a social construction.

Also, since this study has shown that participatory development is not as effective as it is believed, future research could explore how the participatory development theory could be reconstructed so that power inequalities are encapsulated in a holistic fashion.

As suggested in the findings chapters 4 and 6, education seems to be a critical aspect in the empowerment of the San. However, even though they consider education important, their enrolment numbers are very low. Future studies may seek to explore the factors that can help attract and retain the San in both formal and non formal education.

## **8.8 Final remarks**

Although poverty and development among the San have been a focus of several studies, they continue to emerge as complex issues with no one particular solution. As such, the findings of this study remain tentative. As Griffiths (1998) has explained, critical research takes a political stance. As such, my research like most academic endeavours leads to new questions which might be addressed

on how poverty and underdevelopment can be tackled among disadvantaged groups. As indicated in this study, although participatory development is mostly seen as a panacea for disempowerment, it can in fact (re)produce the very disempowerment it seeks to fight. This indicates that researchers need to view the larger context which gives rise to exclusion and disempowerment rather than seeking morally appealing and politically acceptable methods.

As indicated by the findings, although poverty and underdevelopment are normally signified by material things such as infrastructure, provision of these resources on their own cannot provide a long-lasting solution. When existing power relations are left intact, inequalities and exclusion will continue to be institutionalised and become the 'rules of the game' despite physical infrastructure. In this instance, disadvantaged groups' bargaining power is consistently weakened.

In conclusion, the issues that were unearthed in this study strongly suggest a transformation in governance because political will is critical for national development. A responsive government is important in ensuring equitable distribution of both material and non-material resources.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Ethics approval



University of Glasgow | College of Social Sciences

#### Ethics Committee for Non Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

#### Postgraduate Research: NOTIFICATION OF ETHICS APPLICATION OUTCOME

##### Application Details

Application Type **New** Application Number: CSS20120232

Applicant's Name Keneilwe Molosi

Project Title The impact of the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP) on the socio-economic development of the San: A case of the Sehunong and Khwee settlements

Date application reviewed 28/10/2012

##### Application Outcome



**Approved but amendments required**

Start Date of Approval **02 November 2012** End Date of Approval **31 December 2014**

If the applicant has been given approval subject to amendments this means they can proceed with their data collection with effect from the date of approval, however they should note the following applies to their application:



Approved Subject to Amendments without the need to submit amendments to the Supervisor



**Approved Subject to Amendments made to the satisfaction of the applicant's Supervisor**

*Some amendments only need to be submitted to an applicant's supervisor. This will apply to essential items that an applicant must address prior to ethical approval being granted, however as the associated research ethics risks are considered to be low, consequently the applicant's response need only be reviewed and cleared by the applicant's supervisor before the research can properly begin. If any application is processed under this outcome the Supervisor will need to inform the College Ethics Secretary that the application has been re-submitted (and include the final outcome).*



Approved Subject to Amendments made to the satisfaction of the College Ethics & Research Committee

The College Research Ethics Committee expects the applicant to act responsibly in addressing the recommended amendments.

A covering note (letter or email) must be provided highlighting how the major and minor recommendations have been addressed.



### Application is Not Approved at this time

Please note the comments below and provide further information where requested. The full application should then be sent to the College Office via e-mail to [Terri.Hume@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Terri.Hume@glasgow.ac.uk). You must include a covering letter to explain the changes you have made to the application.



### Choose an item.

*This section only applies to applicants whose original application was approved but required amendments.*

## **Application Comments**

### **Major Recommendations** (where applicable)

The applicant's supervisors have noted that this is not a low risk project because the applicant is travelling abroad to an area she is not familiar with and surveying research participants unknown to her. The answer at Q4 is insufficient to address this and the applicant should provide detailed information about how she will ensure her safety and adequate support during her fieldwork

At 1.9 on the application, it says n/a to external funding but, on the PLS, it states that the study is being sponsored by the University of Botswana. Please clarify

At 2.3a, questionnaire is ticked but no questionnaire is provided or discussed. Is this an error?

At 2.4b The applicant details how data will be held in locked cabinets at Glasgow University or at her home address in Scotland but has not indicated how data will be stored during fieldwork in Botswana.

#### PLS

The email for the applicant at 2 points on the PLS is incorrect

Are there any plans to translate this PLS into different dialects or is the applicant comfortable that everyone approached understands and can read English?

The application has been reviewed by the College of Social Sciences Ethics Committee not the University of Glasgow Ethics Committee. This should be amended

Please clarify that Valentina Bold is Ethics Officer for the CoSSEC at Glasgow University as there are two ethics committees involved

#### Consent form

Remove the section at the foot of the document where a parent can sign on behalf of the participant as this is not relevant as the application has been written

#### Focus Group questions

The focus groups are expected to last between 1 and 1.5 hours but the questions detailed do not indicate how the group will need that long. It would be helpful to see further detail about how the applicant intends to probe during the focus group as two very general questions provide insufficient information.

#### Individual interview pro formas

Why is it necessary to put the participant's name on this form? If any notes were subsequently added to the form relating to the interview, the participant would be identified. Is it possible to use a key linking name to a code or pseudonym which could be used?

### **Minor Recommendations** (where applicable)

#### PLS

The line "Study title and researcher details" can be removed as this information is repeated in individual headings immediately below

If amendments have been recommended, **please ensure that copies of amended documents are provided to the College Office** for completion of your ethics file.

~~~~~  
~~~~~Reviewer Comments (other than specific recommendations)

None.

~~~~~  
~~~~~

Please retain this notification for future reference. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Terri Hume, Ethics Secretary, in Room 104, Florentine House, 53 Hillhead Street, Glasgow G12 8QF.

End of Notification.



## Appendix 2: Interview guide for San RADP beneficiaries

Participant code:

Date of interview:

1. What is your general understanding of development?
2. From development interventions you know, what would you say is their impact on your way of life?
3. What do you see as the role of the RADP in the development of the San community?
4. How do you feel about RADP education provision in the remote areas?
5. what is the role of your community in the implementation of the RADP interventions?

**Appendix 3: Community leaders interview guide (chiefs, RADOs, councillors, VDC members, school heads)**

Name of participant:

Date of interview:

1. Can you explain the role you play in relation to the RADP?
2. How do you understand development?
3. What are your views towards the RADP and the development of the San in this community?
4. What can you say about the RADP interventions and community empowerment?
5. Tell me about your experiences of working with both San and non-San RADP beneficiaries.
6. Is there any other thing you would like to say?

Thank you